IN THE LAND OF MOSQUES AND MINARETS



MEDITERRANEAN AFRICA

PENNED AND PICTURED BY
Francis Milfoun
and
Blanche McManus

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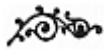
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The Caïd of the Msaaba
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In the Land of Mosques & Minarets

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Officier du Nicham Iftikhar

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With Illustrations from paintings made on the spot

BY BLANCHE MC MANUS



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In the Land of Mosques and Minarets

CHAPTER I

GOING AND COMING

"Say, dear friend, wouldst thou go to the land where pass the caravans beneath the shadow of the palm trees of the Oasis; where even in mid-winter all is in flower as in spring-time elsewhere."—Villiers de l'Isle Adam.

THE taste for travel is an acquired accomplishment. Not every one likes to rough it. Some demand home comforts; others luxurious appointments; but you don't get either of these in North Africa, save in the palace hotels of Algiers, Biskra and Tunis, and even there these things are less complete than many would wish.

We knew all this when we started out. We had become habituated as it were, for we had been there before. The railways of North Africa are poor, uncomfortable things, and excruciatingly slow; the steamships between Marseilles or Genoa and the African littoral are either uncomfortably crowded, or wobbly, slow-going tubs; and there are many discomforts of travel—not forgetting fleas—which considerably mitigate the joys of the conventional traveller who affects floating hotels and Pullman car luxuries.

The wonderful African-Mediterranean setting is a patent attraction and is very lovely. Every one thinks that; but it is best always to take ways and means into consideration when journeying, and if the game is not worth the candle, let it alone.

This book is not written in commendation only of the good things of life which one meets with in North Africa, but is a personal record of things seen and heard by the artist and the author. As such it may be accepted as a faithful transcript of sights and scenes—and many correlative things that matter—which will prove to be the portion of others who follow after. These things have been seen by many who have gone before who, however, have

not had the courage to paint or describe them as they found them.

Victor Hugo discovered the Rhine, Théophile Gautier Italy, De Nerval the Orient, and Merimée Spain; but they did not blush over the dark side and include only the more charming. For this reason the French descriptive writer has often given a more faithful picture of strange lands than that limned by Anglo-Saxon writers who have mostly praised them in an ignorant, sentimental fashion, or reviled them because they had left their own damp sheets and stogy food behind, and really did not enjoy travel—or even life—without them. There is a happy mean for the travellers' mood which must be cultivated, if one is not born with it, else all hope of pleasurable travel is lost for ever.

The comparison holds good with regard to North Africa and its Arab population. Sir Richard Burton certainly wrote a masterful work in his "Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina," and set forth the Arab character as no one else has done; but he said some things, and did some things, too, that his fellow countrymen did not like, and so they were loth to accept his great work at its face value.

The African Mediterranean littoral, the mountains and the desert beyond, and all that lies between, have found their only true exponents in Mme. Myriam Harry, MM. Louis Bertrand, Arnaud and Maryval, André Gide and Isabelle Eberhardt, and Victor Barrucaud. These and some others mentioned further on are the latter-day authorities on the Arab life of Africa, though the makers of English books on Algeria and Tunisia seem never to have heard of them, much less profited by their next-to-the-soil knowledge. Instead they have preferred to weave their romances and novels on "home-country" lines, using a Mediterranean or Saharan setting for characters which are not of Africa and which have no place therein.

This book is a record of various journeyings in that

domain of North Africa where French influence is paramount; and is confidently offered as the result of much absorption of first-hand experiences and observations, coupled with authenticated facts of history and romance. All the elements have been found *sur place* and have been woven into the pages which follow in order that nothing desirable of local colour should be lost by allowing too great an expanse of sea and land to intervene.

The story of Algeria and Tunisia has so often been told by the French, and its moods have so often been painted by *les "gens d'esprit et de talent,"* that a foreigner has a considerable task laid out for him in his effort to do the subject justice. Think of trying to catch the fire and spirit of Fromentin, of Loti, of the Maupassants or Masqueray, or the local colour of the canvases of Dinet, Armand Point, Potter, Besnard, Constant, Cabannes, Guillaumet, or Ziem! Then go and try to paint the picture as it looks to you. Yet why not? We live to learn; and, as all the phases of this subtropical land have not been exploited, why should we—the author and artist—not have a hand in it?

So we started out. The mistral had begun to blow at Martigues (la Venise Provençal known by artist folk of all nationalities, but unknown—as yet—to the world of tourists), where we had made our Mediterranean headquarters for some years, but the sirocco was still blowing contrariwise from the south on the African coast, and it was for that reason that the author, the artist and another—the agreeable travelling companion, a rara avis by the way—made a hurried start.

We were tired of the grime and grind of cities of convention; and were minded, after another round of travel, to repose a bit in some half-dormant, half-progressive little town of the Barbary coast, or some desert oasis where one might, if he would, still dream the dreams of the Arabian nights and days, regardless of a certain reflected glamour of vulgar modernity which filters

through to the utmost Saharan outposts from the great ports of the coast.

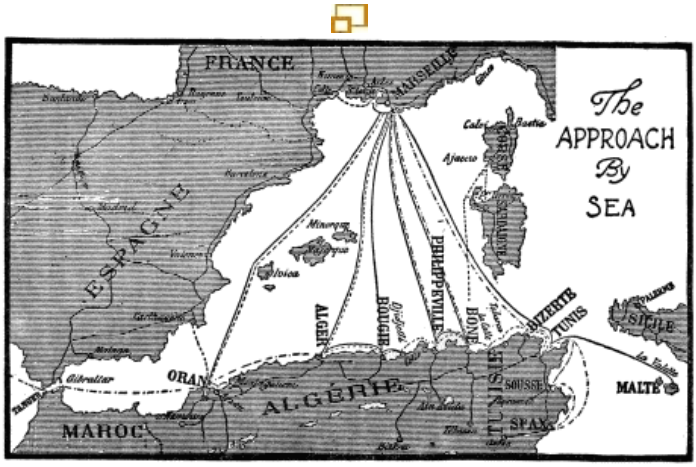
By a fortunate chance weather and circumstances favoured this last journey, and thus the making of this book became a most enjoyable labour.

We left Marseilles for the land of the sun at six of an early autumn evening, the "*heure verte*" of the Marseillais, when the whole Cannebière smells of absinthe, alcohol, and anise, and all the world is at ease after a bustling, rustling day of busy affairs. These men of the Midi, though they seemingly take things easy are a very industrious race. There is no such virile movement in Paris, even on the boulevards, as one may witness on Marseilles' famous Cannebière at the seducing hour of the Frenchman's *apéritif*. Marseilles is a ceaseless turmoil of busy workaday affairs as well. From the ever-present gaiety of the Cannebière cafés it is but a step to the great *quais* and their creaking capstans and shouting longshoremen.

From the *quais* of La Joliette all the world and his wife come and go in an interminable and constant tide of travel, to Africa, to Corsica and Sardinia; to Jaffa and Constantinople; to Port Said and the East, India, Australia, China and Japan; and westward, through Gibraltar's Strait to the Mexican Gulf and the Argentine. The like of Marseilles exists nowhere on earth; it is the most brilliant and lively of all the ports of the world. It is the principal seaport of the Mediterranean and the third city of France.

Our small, tubby steamer slipped slowly and silently out between the Joliette *quais* and past the towering Notre Dame de la Garde and the great Byzantine Cathedral of Sainte Marie Majeur, leaving the twinkling lights of the Vieux Port and the Pharo soon far behind. Past Château d'If, the Point des Catalans, Ratonneau and Pomègue we steamed, all reminiscent of Dumas and that masterpiece of his gallant portrait gallery,—"The Count of Monte Cristo."

The great Planier light flashed its rays in our way for thirty odd miles seaward, keeping us company long after we had eaten a good dinner, a very good dinner indeed, with *café-cognac*—or *chartreuse*, real *chartreuse*, not the base imitation, mark you, *tout compris*, to top off with. The boat was a poor, wallowing thing of eight hundred tons or so, but the dinner was much better than many an Atlantic liner gives. It had character, and was served



in a tiny saloon on deck, with doors and ports all open, and a gentle, sighing Mediterranean *brise* wafting about our heads.

We were six passengers all told, and we were very, very comfortably installed on the *Isly* of the Compagnie Touache, in spite of the fact that the craft owned to twenty-seven years and made only ten knots. The Compagnie Générale Transatlantique has boats of the comparatively youthful age of twelve and seventeen, but they are so crowded that one is infinitely less comfortable, though they make the voyage at a gait of fifteen or sixteen knots. Then again the food is by no means so good or well served as

that we had on the *Isly*. We have tried them both, and, as we asked no favours of price or accommodation in either case, the opinion may be set down as frank, truthful and personal. What others may think all depends on themselves and circumstance.

In Algeria, at any rate, one doesn't find trippers, and there are surprisingly few of what the French call "*Anglaises sans-gêne*" and "*Allemands grotesques*."

The traveller in Algeria should by all means eliminate his countrymen and study the native races and the French *colons*, if he wishes to know something of the country. Otherwise he will know nothing, and might as well have gone to a magic-lantern show at home.

It is a delightfully soft, exotic land which the geographers know as Mediterranean Africa, and which is fast becoming known to the world of modern travellers as the newest winter playground. The tide of pleasure-seeking travel has turned towards Algeria and Tunisia, but the plea is herein made to those who follow after for the better knowing of the places off the beaten track, Bou-Saada, Kairouan, the Oasis of Gabès, Oued-Souf or Tlemcen, for instance, something besides Mustapha, Biskra and Tunis.

Darkest Africa is no more darkest Africa. That idea was exploded when Stanley uttered his famous words: "Doctor Livingstone, I presume." And since that day the late Cecil Rhodes launched his Cape to Cairo scheme, and Africa has been given over to diamond-mine exploiters, rubber collectors and semi-invalids, who, hearing wonderful tales of the climatic conditions of Assouan and Biskra, have foregathered in these places, to the joy of the native and the profit of the hotel director—usually a Swiss.

Occasionally one has heard of an adventurous tourist who has hunted the wild gazelle in the Atlas or the mountains of Kabylie, the gentlest man-fearing creature God ever made, or who has "camped-out" in a tent

furnished by Cook, and has come home and told of his exploits which in truth were more Tartarinesque than daring.

The trail of the traveller is over all to-day; but he follows as a rule only the well-worn *pistes*. In addition to those strangers who live in Algiers or Tunis and have made of those cities weak imitations of European capitals and their suburbs as characterless as those of Paris, London or Chicago, they have also imported such conventions as "bars" and "tea-rooms" to Biskra and Hammam-R'hira.

Tlemcen and its mosques, however; Figuig and its fortress-looking Grand Hôtel du Sahara at Beni-Ounif; Touggourt and its market and its military posts; and Bou-Saada and Tozeur with their oases are as yet comparatively unknown ground to all except artists who have the passion of going everywhere and anywhere in search of the unspoiled.

When it comes to Oued-Souf with its one "*Maison française*," which, by the way, is inhabited by the Frenchified Sheik of the Msaâba to whom a chapter is devoted in this book later on; or Ghardaïa, the Holy City of the Sud-Constantinois, the case were still more different. This is still virgin ground for the stranger, and can only be reached by diligence or caravan.

The railway with a fairly good equipment runs all the length of Algeria and Tunisia, from the Moroccan frontier at Tlemcen to Gabès and beyond, almost to the boundary of Tripoli in Barbary. An automobile would be much quicker, and in some parts even a donkey, but the railway serves as well as it ever does in a new-old country where it has recently been installed.

If one enters by Algiers or Oran and leaves by Tunis or even Sfax or Gabès he has done the round; but if opportunity offers, he should go south from Tlemcen into the real desert at Figuig; from Biskra to Touggourt; or

from Gabès to Tozeur. Otherwise he will have so kept "in touch" with things that he can, for the asking, have oatmeal for breakfast and marmalade for tea, which is not what one comes, or should come, to Africa for. One takes his departure from French Mediterranean Africa from Tunis or Bizerte.

Leaving Tunis and its domes and minarets behind, his ship makes its way gingerly out through the straight-cut canal, a matter of six



The Edge of the Desert

or eight miles to La Goulette, a veritable Italian fishing village in Africa which the Italian population themselves call La Goletta. Here the pilot is sent ashore,—he was a useless personage anyway, but he touches a hundred and

fifty francs for standing on the bridge and doing nothing,—the ship turns a sharp right angle and sets its course northward for Marseilles, leaving Korbus and the great double-horned mountain far in the distance to starboard.

Carthage and its cathedral, and Sidi-bou-Saïd and its minarets are to port, the red soil forming a rich frame for the scintillating white walls scattered here and there over the landscape. La Marsa and the Bey's summer palace loom next in view, Cap Carthage and Cap Bon, and then the open sea.

Midway between Tunis and Marseilles, one sees the red porphyry rocks of Sardinia. Offshore are the little isles which terminate the greater island, the "Taureau," the "Vache" and the "Veau." They are only interesting as landmarks, and look like the outcroppings of other Mediterranean islands. In bad weather the mariners give them a wide berth.

The sight of Sardinia makes no impression on the French passengers. They stare at it, and remark it not. The profound contempt of the Frenchman of the Midi for all things Italian is to be remarked. Corsica is left to starboard, still farther away, in fact not visible, but the Frenchman apparently does not regret this either, even though it has become a French Département. "*Peuh: la Corse*," he says, "*un vilain pays*," where men pass their existence killing each other off. Such is the outcome of traditional, racial rancour, and yet the most patriotic Frenchman the writer has ever known was a Corsican.

"*Voilà! le Cap Sicié!*" said the commandant the second morning at ten o'clock, as he stood on the bridge straining his eyes for a sight of land. We didn't see it, but we took his word for it. A quarter of an hour later it came into view, the great landmark promontory, which juts out into the Mediterranean just west of Toulon.

Just then with a swish and a swirl, and with as icy a

breath as ever blew south from the snow-clad Alps, down came the mistral upon us, and we all went below and passed the most uncomfortable five hours imaginable, anchored off the Estaque, in full view of Marseilles, and yet not able to enter harbour. The Gulf of Lyons and the mistral form an irresistible combination of forces once they get together.

At last in port; the *douanier* keeps a sharp lookout for cigars and cigarettes (which in Algeria and Tunisia sell for about a quarter of what they do in France), and in a quarter of an hour we are installed in that remarkably equipped "Touring Hotel" of Marseilles' Cours Belzunce. *Art nouveau* furniture, no heavy rugs or draperies, metallic bedsteads, and hot and cold running water in every room. This is a good deal to find on this side of the Atlantic. The house should be made note of by all coming this way. Not in the palace hotels of Algiers, Biskra or Tunis can you find such a combination.

CHAPTER II

THE REAL NORTH AFRICA

"*Africque apporte tousjours quelque chose de nouveau.*"
—Rabelais

Algeria and Tunisia are already the vogue, and Biskra, Hammam-R'hira and Mustapha are already names as familiar as Cairo, Amalfi or Teneriffe, even though the throng of "*colis vivants expédiés par Cook*," as the French call them, have not as yet overrun the land. For the most part the travellers in these delightful lands, be they Americans, English or Germans (and the Germans are almost as numerous as the others), are strictly unlabelled, and each goes about his own affairs, one to Tlemcen to paint the Moorish architecture of its mosques, another to

Biskra for his health, and another to Tunis merely to while away his time amid exotic surroundings.

This describes well enough the majority of travellers here, but the other categories are increasing every day, and occasionally a "tourist-steamship" drops down three or four hundred at one fell swoop on the *quais* of Algiers or Tunis, and then those cities become as the Place de l'Opéra, or Piccadilly Circus. These tourists only skirt the fringe of this interesting land, and after thirty-six hours or so go their ways.

One does not become acquainted with the real North Africa in any such fashion.

The picturesque is everywhere in Algeria and Tunisia, and the incoming manners and customs of *outre-mer* only make the contrast more remarkable. It is not the extraordinary thing that astonishes us to-day, for there is no more virgin land to exploit as a touring-ground. It is the rubbing of shoulders with the dwellers in foreign lands who, after all, are human, and have relatively the same desires as ourselves, which they often satisfy in a different manner, that makes travel enjoyable.

What Nubian and Arab Africa will become later, when European races have still further blended the centuries-old tropical and subtropical blood in a gentle assimilated adaptation of men and things, no one can predict. The Arab has become a very good engineer, the Berber can be trained to become a respectable herder of cattle, as the Egyptian *fellah* has been made into a good farmer, or a motorman on the electric railway from Cairo to the Pyramids.

What the French call the "Empire Européen" is bound to envelop Africa some day, and France will be in for the chief part in the division without question. The French seem to understand the situation thoroughly; and, with the storehouse of food products (Algeria and Tunisia, and

perhaps by the time these lines are printed, Morocco) at her very door, she is more than fortunately placed with regard to the development of this part of Africa. The individual German may come and do a little trading on his own account, but it is France as a nation that is going to prosper out of Africa. This is the one paramount aspect of the real North Africa of to-day as it has been for some generations past, a fact which the Foreign Offices of many powers have overlooked.

It is a pity that the whole gamut of the current affairs of North Africa is summed up in many minds by the memory of the palpably false sentiment of the school of fictionists which began with Ouida. Let us hope it has ended, for the picturing of the local colour of Mediterranean and Saharan Africa is really beyond the romancer who writes love-stories for the young ladies of the boarding-schools, and the new women of the *art nouveau* boudoirs. The lithe, dreamy young Arab of fiction, who falls in love with lonesome young women *en voyage* alone to some tourist centre, is purely a myth. There is not a real thing about him, not even his clothes, much less his sentiments; and he and his picturesque natural surroundings jar horribly against each other at best.

The Cigarette of "Under Two Flags" was not even a classically conventional figure, but simply a passionate, tumultuous creature, lovable only for her inconsistencies, which in reality were nothing African in act or sentiment, though that was her environment.

The English lord who became a "Chasseur d'Afrique" was even more unreal—he wasn't a "Chasseur d'Afrique," anyway, he was simply a member of the "Légion Étrangère;" but doubtless Ouida cared less for minutely precise detail than she did to exploit her unconventional convictions. The best novels of to-day are something our parents never dreamed of! Exclamations and exhortations of the characters of "Under Two Flags," "Mon Amour,"

"Ma Patrie," "Les Enfants," are not African. They belong to the parasite faubourgs of Paris' fortifications. Let no one make the mistake, then, of taking this crop of North African novels for their guide and mentor. Much better go with Cook and be done with it, if one lacks the initiative to launch out for himself, and make the itinerary by railway, *diligence* and caravan. If he will, one can travel by *diligence* all over Mediterranean Africa, and by such a means of locomotion he will best see and know the country.

The *diligence* of the plain and mountain roads of Algeria and Tunisia is as remarkable a structure as still rolls on wheels. Its counterpart does not exist to-day in France, Switzerland or Italy. It is generally driven by a portly Arab, with three wheelers and four leaders, seven horses in all. It is made up of many compartments and stories. There is a *rez-de-chaussée*, a *mezzanine* floor and a roof garden, with prices varying accordingly as comfort increases or decreases. A fifty or a hundred kilometre journey therein, or thereon, is an experience one does not readily forget. To begin with, one usually starts at an hour varying from four to seven in the morning, an hour which, even in Algeria, in winter, is dark and chill.

The stage-driver of the "Far West" is a fearsome, capable individual, but the Arab conductor of a "*voiture publique*," with a rope-wound turban on his head, a flowing, entangling burnous, and a five-yard whip, can take more chances in getting around corners or down a sharp incline than any other coach-driver that ever handled the ribbons. Sometimes he has an assistant who handles a shorter whip, and belabours it over the backs of the wheelers, when additional risks accrue. Sometimes, even, this is not enough and the man-at-the-wheel jumps down and runs alongside, slashing viciously at the flying heels of the seven horse power, after which he crawls up aloft and dozes awhile.

Under the hood of the *impériale* is stowed away as miscellaneous a lot of baggage as one can imagine, including perhaps a dozen fowls, a sheep or two, or even a calf. Amidst all this, three or four cross-legged natives wobble and lurch as the equipage makes its perilsome way.

Down below everything is full, too; so that, with its human freight of fifteen or sixteen persons, and the unweighed kilos of merchandise on the roof, the journey may well be described as being fraught with possibilities of disaster. There is treasure aboard, too,—a strong-box bolted to the floor beneath the drivers' feet; and at the rear a weather-proof cast-iron letter-box, padlocked tight and only opened at wayside post-offices. The sequestered colonist, living far from the rail or post, has his only communication with the outside world through the medium of this mobile *bureau de poste*.

The roads of Algeria and Tunisia are marvellously good —where they exist. The Arab roads and routes of old were simple trails, trod down in the herb-grown, sandy soil by the bare feet of men, or camels, or the hoofs of horses and mules. So narrow were these trails that two caravans could not pass each other, so there were two trails, like the steamship "lanes" of the Atlantic.

Tradition still prompts the Kabyles to march in single file on the sixteen meter wide high-roads, which now cross and recross their country, the results of a beneficent French administration. Morocco some day will come in line.

In Tunisia, the roads are as good as they are in Algeria, and they are many and being added to yearly.

There are still to be seen, in the interior, little pyramids of stones, perhaps made up of tens of thousands, or a hundred thousand even, of desert pebbles, each unit placed by some devoted traveller who has recalled that on that spot occurred the death, or perhaps murder, of some pioneer. The Arabs call these monuments Nza, and would

not think for a moment of passing one by without making their offering. It is a delicate, natural expression of sentiment, and one that might well be imitated.

There is no more danger to the tourist travelling through Algeria and Tunisia by road than there would be in France or Italy—and considerably less than might be met with in Spain. There are some brigands and robbers left hiding in the mountains, perhaps, but their raids are on flocks and herds, and not for the mere dross of the gold of tourists, or the gasolene of automobilists. The desert lion is a myth of Tartarinesque poets and artists, and one is not likely to meet anything more savage than a rabbit or a hedgehog all the fifteen hundred or two thousand kilometres from Tlemcen to Gabès.

The African lion is a dweller only in the forest-grown mountains; and the popular belief that it can track for weeks across the desert, drinking only air, and eating only sand, is pure folly of the romantic brand perpetuated by the painter Gérome.

During the last ten years, in all Algeria there were killed only:—

Lions and lionesses and cubs	181
Panthers	988
Hyenas	1,485
Jackals	22,619

It may be taken for granted, then, that there are no great dangers to be experienced on the well-worn roads and *pistes* of Tunisia and Algeria. The hyenas and lions are hidden away in the great mountain fastnesses, and the jackals themselves are harmless enough so far as human beings are concerned. The *sanglier*, or wild boar, is savage enough if attacked when met with, otherwise it is he who flees, whilst the jack-rabbits and the gazelles make up the majority of the “savage life” seen contiguous to the main

travelled roads away from the railways.

Scorpions and horned vipers are everywhere—if one looks for them, otherwise one scarcely ever sees one or the other. The greatest enemy of mankind hereabouts is the flea; and, as the remedy is an obvious and personal one, no more need be said. Another plague is the cricket, grasshopper or *sauterelle*. The *sauterelle*, says the Arab, is the wonder among nature's living things. It has the face of a horse, the eyes of an elephant, the neck of a bull, the horns of a deer, the breast of a lion, the stomach of a scorpion, the legs of an ostrich, the tail of a snake, and is more to be feared than any of the before enumerated menagerie. It all but devastated the chief wheat-growing lands of the plateaux of the provinces of Alger and Constantine a generation or more ago, and brought great misery in its wake.

The scorpion and the gazelle are the two chief novelties among living things (after the camel) with which the stranger makes acquaintance here. The former is unlovely but not dangerous. "*Il pique, mais ne mord pas*," say the French; but no one likes to find them in his shoes in the morning all the same. The gazelle is more likable, a gentle, endearing creature, with great liquid eyes, such as poets attribute to their most lovely feminine creations.

The gazelle is an attribute of all fountain courtyards. It lives and thrives in captivity, can be tamed to follow you like a dog, and is as affectionate as a caressing kitten. It will eat condensed milk, dates, cabbage and cigarettes; but it balks at Pear's soap.

In the open country the nomad Arab or even the house-dweller that one meets by the roadside is an agreeable, willing person, and when he understands French (as he frequently does), he is quite as "useful" as would be his European prototype under similar conditions. The country Arab is courteous, for courtesy's sake, moreover, and not for profit. This is not apt to be the case in the cities and

towns.

The Arab speech of the ports and railway cities and towns is of the solicitous kind. One can't learn anything here of phraseology that will be useful to him in the least and it's bad French. "*Sidi mousi! Moi porter! Moi forsa besef!*" is nothing at all, though it is eloquent, and probably means that the gamin, old or young, wants to carry your baggage or call a cab. And for this you pay in Algiers and Tunis as you pay in London or Paris, but you are not blackmailed as you are in Alexandria or Cairo.

One may not rest two minutes on the terrace of any café in a large Algerian town without having an Arab, a Kabyle, or a Jewish ragamuffin come up and bawl at one incessantly, "*Ciri, ciri, ciri!*" If you have just left your hotel, your boots brilliant as jet from the best Algerian substitute for "Day & Martin's Best," it doesn't matter in the least; they still cry, "*Ciri, ciri, ciri, m'siou!*" Sometimes it is, "*Ciri bien, m'siou!*" and sometimes "*Ciri, kif, kif la glace de Paris!*" But the object of their plaint is always the same. Finally, if you won't let them dull the polish of your *shine*, they will cire their faces and demand "*quat' sous*" from you because you witnessed the operation. Very businesslike are the shoeblacks of Algiers; they don't mind what they *cire* as long as they *cire* something.

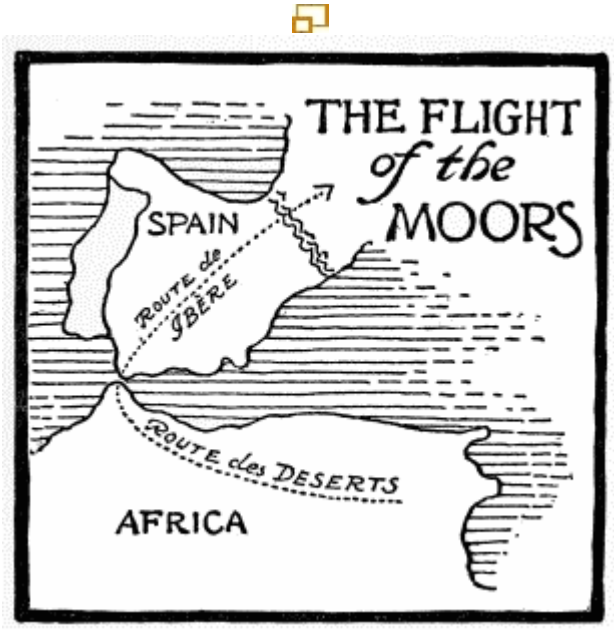


The Café d'Apollon in Algiers is the rendezvous of the "high-life Arab." Here Sheiks from the deserts' great tents, Caïds from the settlements, and others of the vast army of great and small Arab officialdom assemble to take an afternoon *bock* or *apéritif*; for in spite of his religion the Mussulman will sometimes drink beer and white wine. Some, too, are "decorated," and some wear even the *ruban* or *bouton* of the Legion of Honour on their chests where that otherwise useless buttonhole of the coat of civilization would be. Grim, taciturn figures are these, whose only exclamation is a mechanical clacking of the lips or a cynical, gurgling chuckle coming from deep down, expressive of much or little, according as much or little is meant.

The foreign population in Algeria and Tunisia is very mixed; and though all nationalities mingle in trade the foreigners will not become naturalized to any great extent. Out of forty-one naturalized foreigners in Tunis in 1891, 27 were Italians, 2 Alsatians, 2 Luxembourgeois, 2

Maltese, 1 German, 1 Belgian, 1 Moroccan, and 5 individuals of undetermined nationality.

Civilization and progress has marked North Africa for exploitation, but it will never overturn Mohammedanism. The trail of Islam is a long one and plainly marked. From the Moghreb to the Levant and beyond extends the



THE FLIGHT of the MOORS

memory and tradition of Moorish civilization of days long gone by. The field is unlimited, and ranges from the Giralda of Andalusia to the Ottoman mosques of the Dardanelles, though we may regret, with all the Arab poets and historians, the decadence of Granada more than all else. The Arab-Moorish overrunning of North Africa defined an epoch full of the incident of romance, whatever may have been the cruelties of the barbarians. This period endured until finally the sombre cities of the corsairs

became the commercial capitals of to-day, just as glorious Carthage became a residential suburb of Tunis. The hand of time has left its mark plainly imprinted on all Mediterranean Africa, and not even the desire for up-to-dateness on the part of its exploiters will ever efface these memories, nor further desecrate the monuments which still remain.

The French African possessions include more than a third of the continent, an area considerably more extensive than the United States, Alaska, Porto Rico, and the Philippines combined. One hears a lot about the development of the British sphere of influence in Africa; but not much concerning that of the French which, since the unhappy affair of Fashoda, has been more active than ever. The French are not the garrulous nation one sometimes thinks them. They have a way of doing things, and saying nothing, which is often fraught with surprises for the outside world. Perhaps Morocco and Tripoli de Barbarie may come into the fold some day; and, then, with the French holding the railways of Egypt and the Suez Canal, as at present, they will certainly be the dominant Mediterranean and African power, if they may not be reckoned so already.

The Saharan desert is French down to its last grain of sand and the last oasis palm-tree, and it alone has an area half the size of the United States.

Of Mediterranean French Africa, Tunisia is a protectorate, but almost as absolutely governed by the French as if it were a part of the Ile de France. Algérie is a part of France, a Department across the seas like Corse. It holds its own elections and has three senators and six deputies at Paris. Its governor-general is a Frenchman (usually promoted from the Préfecture of some mainland Département) and most of the officialdom and bureaucracy are French.

Trade between Algeria and France, mostly in wines and

food stuffs on one side, and manufactured products on the other, approximates three hundred millions of francs in each direction. Algeria, "la belle Algérie" as the French fondly call it, is not a mere strip of mountain land and desert. It is one of the richest agricultural lands on earth, running eastward from the Moroccan frontier well over into Tunisia; and, for ages, it has been known as the granary of Europe. The Carthaginians and the Phœnicians built colonies and empires here, and Rome was nourished from its wheat-fields and olive-groves.

The wheat of Africa was revered by the Romans of the capital above all others. One of the pro-consuls sent Augustus a little packet of four hundred grains, all grown from one sole seed, whereupon great national granaries were built and the commerce in the wheat of Africa took on forthwith almost the complexion of a monopoly. The sowing and the harvest were most primitive. "I have seen," wrote Pliny (H. N. XVIII, 21), "the sowing and the reaping accomplished here by the aid of a primitive plough, an old woman and a tiny donkey." The visitor may see the same to-day!

At the moment of the first autumn rains the Arab or Berber cultivator works over his soil, or sets his wives on the job, and sows his winter wheat. The planting finished, the small Arab farmer seeks the sunny side of a wall and basks there, watching things grow, smoking much tobacco and drinking much coffee, each of these narcotics very black and strong. Four months later his ample, or meagre, crop comes by chance. Then he flays it, not by means of a flail swung by hand, but by borrowing a little donkey from some neighbour,—if he hasn't one of his own,—and letting the donkey's hoofs trample it out. Now he takes it —or most likely sends it—to market, and his year's work is done. He rolls over to the shady side of his *gourbi* (the sunny side is getting too warm) and loafs along until another autumn. He might grow maize in the interval, but

he doesn't.

The Barbary fig, or prickly-pear cactus, is everywhere in Algeria and Tunisia. It grows wild by the roadside, in great fields, and as a barrier transplanted to the top of the universal mud walls. Frost is its only enemy. Everything and everybody else flees before it except the native who eats its spiny, juicy bulbs and finds them good. The rest of us only find the spines, and throw the fruit away in disgust when we attempt to taste it. The Barbary fig is the Arab's sole food supply when crops fail, the only thing which stands between him and starvation—unless he steals dates or figs from some richer man's plantation. The Arab's wants are not great, and with fifty francs and some ingenuity he can live a year.

The palm-trees of Africa number scores of varieties, but those of the Mediterranean states and provinces, the date-bearing palm, come within three well-defined classes: the *Phœnix-dactylifera*, the *chamaerops-humilis* and the *cucifera-thebaica*.

Even the smallest Arab proprietor of land or sheep or goats pays taxes. The French leave its collection to the local Caïds or Sheiks, but it gets into the official coffers ultimately,—or most of it does.

In Algeria there are four principal taxes, or *impôts*:

The *Achour* on cereals; the *Zekai*, on sheep and cattle to-day, but originally a tax collected for the general good, as prescribed by the Koran; the *Hokar* (in Constantine), a tax on land; the *Lezma*, the generic term for various contributions, such as the right to carry firearms (the only tax levied in Kabylie), and the tax on date-palms in the Sud-Algérie and Sud-Oranais. The Arab carries a gun only after he gets a permit, which he must show every time he buys powder or shot.

In Tunisia the taxes are much the same; but there is a specific tax on olive-trees as well as date-palms, and on the

markets and the products sold there.

The wines of Algeria and Tunisia are the product of foreign vines whose roots were transplanted here but little more than half a century ago. These vines came from all parts, from France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Malta and America; and now the "*vin d'Algérie*" goes out to the ends of the earth,—usually under the name of a *cru* more famous. It is very good wine nevertheless, this rich, hybrid juice of the grape; and, though the Provençal of Chateauneuf, the sons of the Aude, the Garde and the Hérault, or the men of Roussillon do not recognize Algerian wine as a worthy competitor of their own vintages, it is such all the same. And the Peroximen, supposed to be a product only of Andalusia, and the Muscatel of Alexandria, are very nearly as good grown on Algerian soil as when gathered in the place of their birth.

The "*vin rosé*" of Kolea, the really superb wines of Médea, and the "*vin blanc de Carthage*," should carry the fame of these North African vintages to all who are, or think they are, judges of good wine.

With such a rich larder at their very doors, the mediæval Mediterranean nations were in a constant quarrel over its possession. Vandals and Greeks fought for the right to populate it after the Romans, but the Moorish wave was too strong; the Arab crowded the Berber to the wall and made him a Mussulman instead of a Christian, a religious faith which the French have held inviolate so far as proselytizing goes. It is this one fundamental principle which has done much to make the French rule in Algeria the success that it is. Britain should leave religion out of her colonizing schemes if she would avoid the unrest which is continually cropping up in various parts of the empire; and the United States should leave the friars of the Philippines alone, and let them grow fat if they will, and develop the country on business lines. We are apt to think that the French are slow in business matters, but they get

results sometimes in an astonishingly successful manner, and by methods which they copy from no one.

The ports of Algeria and Tunisia are of great antiquity. The Romans, not content with the natural advantages offered as harbours, frequently cut them out of the soft rock itself, or built out jetties or *quais*, as have all dock engineers since when occasion demanded. There are vestiges of these old Roman *quais* at Bougie, at Collo, at Cherchell, at Stora and at Bona. These Roman works, destroyed or abandoned at the Vandal invasion, were never rebuilt; and the great oversea traders of the Italian Republics, of France and of Spain, merely hung around offshore and transacted their business, as do the tourist steamers at Jaffa to-day, while their personally conducted hordes descend upon Jerusalem and the Jordan.

The Barbary pirates had little inlets and outlets which they alone knew, and flitted in and out of on their nefarious projects; but only at Algiers, until in comparatively recent times, were there any ports or harbours, legitimately so called, in either Algeria or Tunisia, though the Spaniards, when in occupation of Oran in the eighteenth century, made some inefficient attempts towards waterside improvements of a permanent character.

In thinking of North Africa it is well to recall that it is not a tropical belt, nor even a subtropical one. It is very like the climate of the latitude of Washington, though perhaps with less rain in winter. It is not for a moment to be compared with California or Bermuda.

The temperature on the Algerian coast is normally as follows:—

Winter, 11°-12° centigrade Summer, 25° centigrade
Spring, 15°-16° centigrade Autumn, 19°-20° centigrade
Average yearly, 17°-18° centigrade

As compared with the temperature of the French

Riviera, taking Nice as an example, the balance swings in favour of Algeria in winter, and a trifle against it for summer, as the following figures show:—

Winter, 9° centigrade Summer, 23° centigrade
Spring, 17° centigrade Autumn, 18° centigrade
Yearly average, 16° centigrade

One pertinent observation on North Africa is that regarding the influx of outside civilizing influences. The American invasion of manufactured products is here something considerable; but as yet it has achieved nothing like its possibilities, save perhaps in electrical tramway installation, sewing machines and five-gallon tins of kerosene. The French have *got* North Africa, mostly; the Germans the trade in cutlery; the English (or the Scotch) that in whiskey and marmalade; but the American shipments of "Singers" and "Standards" must in total figures swamp any of the other single "foreign imports" in value. One does not speak of course of imports from France. As the argument of the dealers, who push the sewing-machine into the desert *gourbis* of the nomads and the mountain dwellings of the Kabyles, has it, the civilizing influences of Algeria have been railways, public schools and "Singers." What progressive Arab could be expected to resist such an argument for progress, with easy-payment terms of a franc a week as the chief inducement? The only objection seems to be that his delicately fashioned, creamy, woollen burnous of old is fast becoming a ready-made "lock-stitch" affair, which lacks the loving marks of the real hand-made article. Other things from America are agricultural machinery, ice-cream freezers, oil-stoves, corn meal, corned beef, salmon from Seattle, and pickles from Bunker Hill. As yet the trade in these "staples" is infinitesimal when compared with what it might be if "pushed," which it is not because all these things come mostly through London warehouse men, who

"push" something else when they can.

A few things America will not be able to sell in North Africa are boots and shoes, the Arab wears his neatly folded down at the heel, and ours are not that kind; nor socks, nor stockings, the Arab buys a gaudy "near-silk," made in the Vosges, when he buys any, and the women don't wear them; nor hats, though a Stetson, No. 7, would please them mightily, all but the price. There is no demand for folding-beds or elastic bookcases. The Arab sleeps on the floor, and the only book he possesses, if he can read, is a copy of the Koran, which he tucks away inside his burnous and carries about with him everywhere. Chairs he has no need for; when the Arab doesn't lie or huddle on the ground, he sits dangle-legged or cross-legged on a bench, which is a home-made affair. The women mostly squat on their heels, which looks uncomfortable, but which they seem to enjoy.

Besides the American invasion, there is the German occupation to reckon with—in a trade sense.

"Those terrible Germans," is a newspaper phrase of recent coinage which is applicable to almost any reference to the German trade invasion of every country under the sun, save perhaps the United States and Canada. In South America, in Russia, and in the African Mediterranean States and Provinces, the Teuton has pushed his trading instincts to the utmost. He may be no sort of a colonizer himself, but he knows how to sell goods. In North Africa, in the coast towns, over a thousand German firms have established themselves within the last ten years, all the way from Tangier to Port Saïd. This may mean little or nothing to the offhand thinker; but when one recalls that the blackamoor and the Arab have learned to use matches and folding pocket-knives, and have even been known to invest in talking machines, it is also well to recall that the German can produce these things, "machine-made," and market them cheaper than any other nation. For this reason

he floods the market, where the taste is not too critical, and the cry is here for cheapness above all things. This is the Arab's point of view, hence the increasing hordes of German traders.

To show the German is indefatigable, and that he knows North Africa to its depths, the case of the late German consul at Cairo, Paul Gerhard, who wrote a monumental work on the butterflies of North Africa, is worth recalling.

CHAPTER III

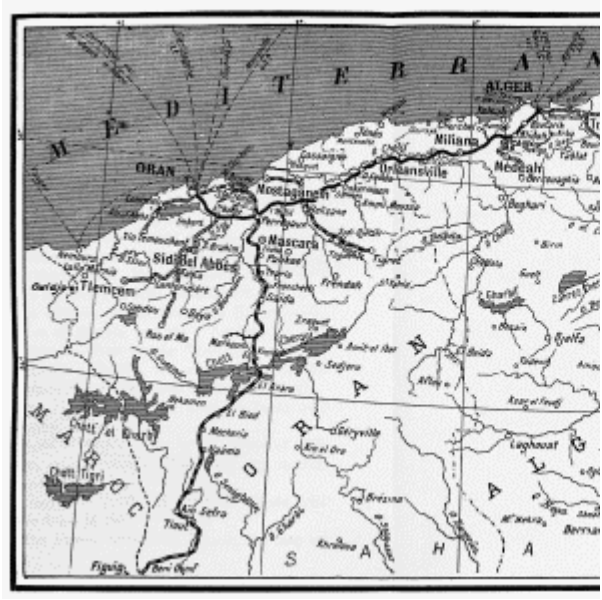
ALGERIA OF TO-DAY

"Le coq Gaulois est le coq de la gloire.
Il chante bien fort quand il gagne une victoire
Et encore plus fort quand il est battu."

Algeria is by no means savage Africa, even though its population is mostly *indigène*. It forms a "*circonscription académique*" of France. It has a national observatory, a branch of that at Paris, founded in 1858; a school of medicine and pharmacy; a school of law; a faculty of letters and sciences, and three endowed chairs of Arabic, at Algiers (founded in 1836); Oran (1850) and Constantine (1858).

Algeria has a great future in store, although it has cost France 8,593,000,000 francs since its occupation seventy years ago, and has only produced a revenue of 2,330,000,000 francs, which represents the loss of a sum greater than the war indemnity of 1870. The Algerian budget balanced for the first time in 1901 without subsidies from home.

The entire population of Algeria is 4,124,732, of which 3,524,000 are Arabs, Kabyles or



Berbers, and the subdivided races hereafter mentioned, leaving in the neighbourhood of 600,000 Europeans, whose numbers are largely increasing each year.

The rate of increase of the European population, from 1836, when the French first occupied the country, has been notable. In 1836 there were 14,561 Europeans in the colony; in 1881, 423,881, of which 233,937 were French, 112,047 Spanish, and 31,865 Italians, and to-day the figure is over 600,000.

The Arab and Berber population, too, are notably increasing; they are not disappearing like the red man. From 2,320,000, in 1851, they have increased, in 1891, to 3,524,000.

In addition to the Arab and Berber population of Algeria, and the “foreigners” and Europeans, there are the following:

Moors—(90,500), the mixed issue of the Berbers and all

the races inhabiting Algeria.

Koulouglis—(20,000), born of Turks and Moorish women.

Jews—(47,667), who by the decree of 1870 were made French. (This does not include unnaturalized Jews.)

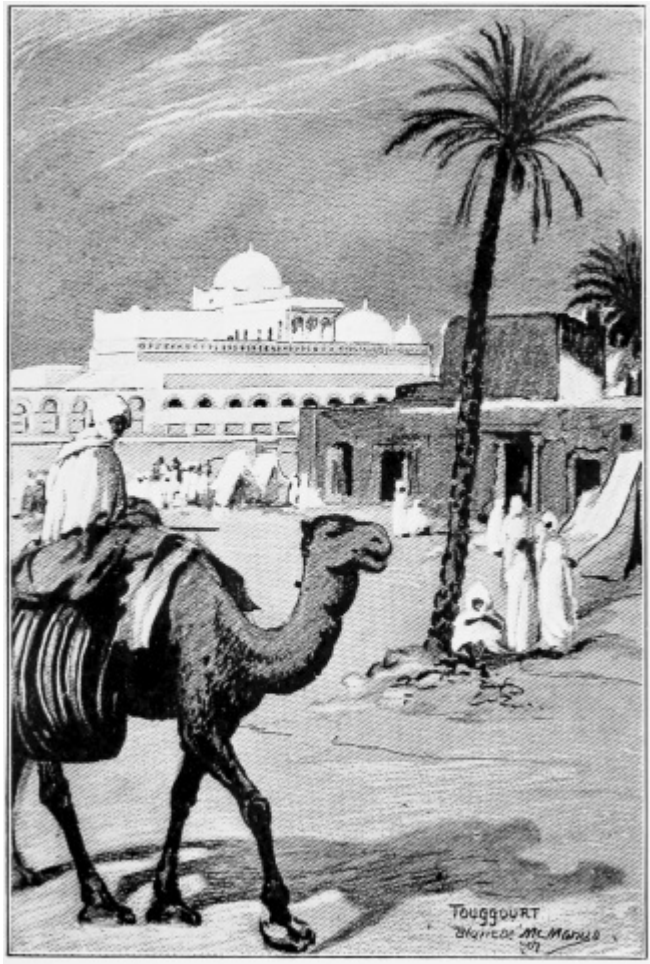
Negroes—(5,000), the former slaves who were freed in 1848.

The French colonist in Algeria, the man on the spot, understands the Arab question better than the minister and officials of the Colonial Office of the Pavilion Sully, though the French have succeeded in making of Algeria what they have never accomplished with their other colonies—a paying proposition at last. Still France governs Algeria under a sort of "up-the-state," "Raines-law" rule, and treats the *indigène* of Laghouat or Touggourt as they would a boatman of Pontoise or a farm labourer of Étampes. The French colonial howls against all the mistakes and indiscretions of a "Boulevard Government" for the Sahara, and even revile the Governor General, whom he calls a civilian dressed up in military garb and no governor at all. *Que diable!* This savours of partisanship and politics, but it is an echo of what one hears as "café talk" any time he opens his ears in Algiers.

All is peace and concord within, however, in spite of the small talk of the cafés; and the Arab and European live side by side, each enjoying practically the same rights and protection that they would if they lived in suburban Paris.

The Caïd or Sheik or head man of a tribe is the go-between in all that concerns the affairs of the native with the French government.





Touggourt

The name Caïd was formerly given to the governors of the provinces of the Barbary States, but to-day that individual has absolutely disappeared, though he still remains as an administrator of French law, under the surveillance of the military government. In reality the Caïd still remains the official head of his tribe, and in this position is sustained by the French authorities.

The Arab has adopted the new order of things very graciously, but he can't get over his ancient desire to hoard gold; and, for that reason, no Algerian gold coin exists, and there is no gold in circulation to speak of. The Arab, when he gets it, buries it, forgets where, or dies and forgets to tell any one where, which is the same thing, and thus a certain very considerable amount is lost to circulation.

Paper money, in values of twenty and fifty francs, takes the place of gold; the Arab thinks that it is something that is perishable, and accordingly spends it and keeps the country prosperous. The French understand the Arab and his foibles; there is no doubt about that. They solved the question of a circulating currency in Algeria. New York and Washington representatives of *haute finance* might take a few lessons here.

With regard to the money question, the stranger in Algeria must beware of false and non-current coin. Anything that's a coin looks good to an Arab, and for that reason a large amount of spurious stuff is in circulation. It was originally made by counterfeiters to gull the native, but to-day the stranger gets his share, or more than his share.

To replace the gold "*louis*" of France, the Banque d'Algérie issues "shin-plasters" of twenty francs. They are convenient, but one must get rid of them before leaving the country or else sell them to a money changer at a discount. These Algerian bank-notes now pass current in Tunisia, a branch of the parent bank having recently been opened there.

The commercial possibilities of Algeria have hardly, as yet, begun to be exploited, though the wine and wheat-growing lands are highly developed; and, since their opening, have suffered no lack of prosperity, save for a plague of *phylloxera* which set back the vines on one occasion, and a plague of locusts which one day devastated almost the entire region of the wheat-growing plateaux. It

was then the Arabs became locust-eaters, though indeed they are not become a cult as in Japan. With the Arab it was a case of eating locusts or nothing, for there was no grain.

This plague of locusts fell upon the province of Constantine in 1885, and from Laghouat to Bou-Saada, and from Kenchela to Aumale they were brought in myriads by the sirocco of the desert from no one knows where.

For two years these great cereal-growing areas were cleared of their crops as though a wild-fire had passed over them, until finally the government by strenuous efforts, and the employment of many thousands of labourers, was able to control and arrest the march of the plague.

During this period many of the new colonists saw their utmost resources disappear; but gallantly they took up their task anew, and for the past dozen years only occasional slight recurrences of the pest have been noted, and they, fortunately, have been suppressed as they appeared.

Besides wheat and wine, tobacco is an almost equal source of profit to Algeria. In France no one may grow a tobacco plant, even as an embellishment to his garden-plot, without first informing the excise authorities, who, afterwards, will come around periodically and count the leaves. In Africa the tobacco crop is something that brings peace and plenty to any who will cultivate it judiciously, for the consumption of the weed is great.

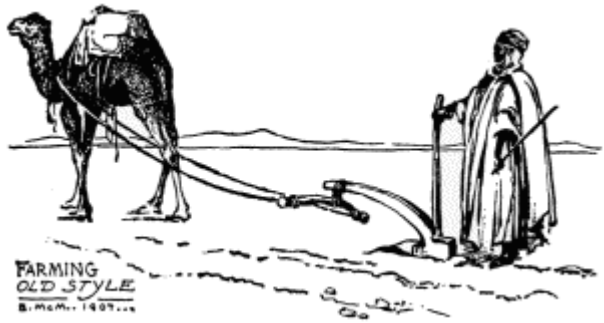
Manufactured tobacco is cheap in Algeria. Neither cigars, cigarettes nor pipe mixtures, nor snuff either, pay any excise duties; and even foreign tobaccos, which mostly come from Hungary and the Turkish provinces, pay very little.

Two-thirds of the Algerian manufactured product is made from home-grown tobacco, and a very large quantity of the same is sent to France to be sold as “Maryland;”

though, indeed, if the original plants ever came from the other side of the water, it was by a very roundabout route. Certainly the broom-corn tobacco of France does not resemble that of Maryland in the least. The hope of France and her colonies is to grow all the tobacco consumed within her frontiers, whether it is labelled "Maryland," "Turkish" or "Scaferlati." The French government puts out some awful stuff it calls tobacco and sells under fancy names.

The tobacco tax in Algeria is *nil*, and that on wine is nearly so. Four sous a *hectolitre* (100 *litres*) is not a heavy tax to pay, though when it was first applied (in 1907) it was the excuse for the retail wine dealer (who in Algeria is but human, when he seeks to make what profit he can) to add two sous to the price of his wine *per litre*. There is a law in France against unfair trading, and the same applies to Algeria. It has been a dead law in many places for many years, but when a tax of four sous a *hectolitre*, originally paid to the state, by the dealer, finally came out of the consumer's pocket as ten francs, an increase of 5,000 per cent., popular clamour and threats of the law caused the dealer to drop back to his original price. This is the way Algeria protects its growing wine industry. Publicists and economists elsewhere should study the system.

The African landscape is very simple and very expressive, severe but not sad, lively but not gay. The great level horizon bars the way south towards the wastes of the Sahara, and the mountains of the Atlas are ever present nearer at hand. The desert of romance, *le vrai désert*, is still a long way off; and, though there is now a macadamized road to Bou-Saada and Biskra, and a railway to Figuig and beyond, civilization is still only at the vestibule of the Sahara. The real development and exploitation of North Africa and its peoples and riches is yet to come.



Farming
OLD STYLE

As for the climate, that of California is undoubtedly superior to that of Algeria, but the topographical and agricultural characteristics are much the same. The greatest difference which will be remarked by an American crossing Algeria from Oran to Souk-Ahras will be the distinct "foreign note" of the installation of its farming communities. Haystacks are plastered over with mud; carts are drawn by mules or horses hitched tandemwise, three, four or five on end, and the carts are mostly two-wheeled at that. There are no fences and no great barns for stocking fodder or sheltering cattle; the farmhouses are all of stone, bare or stucco-covered, and range in colour from sky-blue to pale pink and vivid yellow. There is some American farming machinery in use, but the Arab son of the soil still largely works with the implements of Biblical times.

The winter of Algeria is the winter of Syria, of Japan, and reminiscent to some extent of California; perhaps not so mild on the whole, but still something of an approach thereto. Another contrast favourable to California is that in Algeria there is a lack of certain refinements of modern travel which are to be had in the "land of sunshine." Winter, properly speaking, does not come to Algeria

except on the high plateaux of the provinces of Oran, Alger and Constantine, and on the mountain peaks of the Atlas, and in Kabylie.

South of Algiers stretches the great plain of the Mitidja, which is like no other part of the earth's surface so much as it is like Normandy with respect to its prairies, "la Beauce" for its wheat-fields and its grazing-grounds, and the Bordelais for its vineyards.

At the western extremity of the Mitidja commence the orange-groves of Blida, the forests of olive-trees, and the eucalyptus of La Trappe. The scene is immensely varied and suggestive of untold wealth and prosperity at every kilometre.

Suburban Algiers is thickly built with villas, more or less after the Moorish style, but owned by Europeans. Recently the wealthy Arab has taken to building his "country house" on similar gracious lines; and, when he does, he keeps pretty near to accepted Moorish elements and details, whereas the European, the *colon*, or the *commerçant* grown rich, carries out his idea on the Meudon or St. Cloud plan. The Moorish part is all there, but the thing often doesn't hang together.

To the eastward back of the mountains of Kabylie lies the great plateau region of the Tell.

The Tell is a region vastly different in manners and customs from either the desert or the Algerian littoral. The manners of the nomad of the Sahara here blend into those of the farming peasant; but, by the time Batna is reached, they become tainted with the commercialism of the outside world. At Constantine there is much European influence at work, and at the seacoast towns of Bona or Philippeville the Oriental perfume of the date-palm is lost in that of the smells and cosmopolitanism usually



associated with great seaports. These four distinct characteristics mark four distinct regions of the Numidia of the ancients, to-day the wheat-growing region of the Tell.

The principal mountain peaks in Algeria rise to no great heights. Touabet, near Tlemcen, is 1,620 metres in height; the highest peak of the Grand Kabylie Range, in the province of Alger, is 2,308 metres; and Chelia, in Constantine, 2,328 metres. They are not bold, rugged mountains, but rolling, rounded crests, often destitute of verdure to the point of desolation.

The development of the regions forming the *hinterland* —practically one may so call the Sahara—is of constant and assiduous care to the authorities. They have done much and are doing much more as statistics indicate.

In the valley of the Oued-Righ and the Ziban, one of the most favoured of these borderlands, the government statistics of springs and oases are as follows (1880-90):—

Oases,	38
Springs,	434
Palms,	518,000
Other fruit-trees,	90,000
Value of crops,	5,500,500 fcs.
Inhabitants,	12,827

And as the population increases and fruit-growing areas are further developed, the military engineers come along and dig more wells.

The following average temperatures and rainfall show the contrast between various regions:—

		January (Centigrade)	August (Centigrade)	Rainfall (Millimetres)
Mountains —	Tlemcen	9.2	26	524
	Fort Nationale	10.1	27	982
	Constantine	8.5	26	408
Plateaux —	Géryville	7.2	25.3	126
	Djeefa	7.2	27.6	176
	Tebessa	8.1	27.7	251

It will be noted that, normally, there is very little difference in temperature, and a very considerable difference in rainfall.

The extreme recorded winter temperatures are as follows:—

1906	Aumale	8°	centigrade
	Laghouat	45°	“
1905	Laghouat	7°	“
	Biskra	47°	“
1904	Aumale	3°	“

Tunis 14° “

Algeria has something like 3,100 kilometres of standard gauge railway, and various light railways, or narrow gauge roads, of from ten to fifty kilometres in length, aggregating perhaps five hundred kilometres more. Railway building and development is going on constantly, but they don’t yet know what an express train is, and the sleeping and dining car services are almost as bad as they are in England. The real up-to-date sleeping-car has electric lights and hot and cold water as well as steam heat. They have dreamed of none of these things yet in England or Africa.

The railway is the chief civilizing developer of a country. The railway receipts in Algeria in 1870 were 2,500,000 francs. In 1900 they were 26,000,000 francs. That’s an increase of a thousand per cent., and it all came out of the country.

The “Routes Nationales” of Algeria (not counting by-roads, etc.), the real arteries of the life-blood of the country, at the same periods numbered almost an equal extent, and they are still being built. Give a new country good roads and good railways and it is bound to prosper.

Four millions of the total population of Algeria (including something over two hundred thousand Europeans) are dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood. Wheat, wine and tobacco rank in importance in the order named.

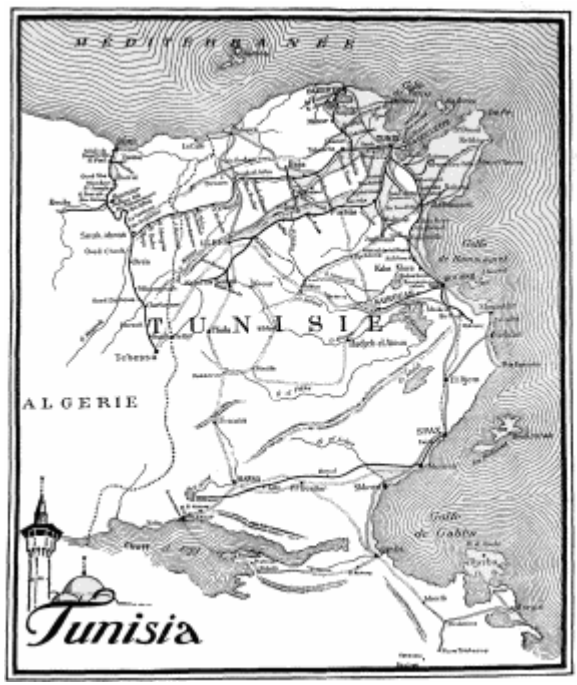
The growth of the wine industry has been most remarkable.

In 1872	4,994,000	gallons were produced
“ 1880	9,504,000	“““
“ 1888	60,742,000	“““
“ 1898	100,194,600	“““

None of it is sold as Bordeaux or Burgundy, at least not

by the Algerian grower or dealer. It is quite good enough to sell on its own merits. Let Australia, then, fabricate so-called "Burgundy" and Germany "Champagne"—Algeria has no need for any of these wiles.

Grapes, figs and plums are seemingly better in Algeria than elsewhere. Not better, perhaps, but they are so abundant that one eats only of the best. The rest are exported to England and Germany. The little *mandarin* oranges from Blida and about there, are one of the stand-bys of Algerian trade. So are olives and dates.



CHAPTER IV

THE RÉGENCE OF TUNISIA AND THE TUNISIANS

For twenty years France has been putting forth her best efforts and energies into the development of Tunisia, to make it a worthy and helpful sister to Algeria. From a French population of seven hundred at the time of the occupation in 1882, the number has risen to fifty thousand.

Tunisia of to-day was the Lybia of the ancients; but whether it was peopled originally from Spain, from Egypt or from peoples from the south, history is silent, or at least is not convincingly loud-voiced.

Lybian, Punic, Roman, Vandal and Byzantine, the country became in turn, then Mussulman; for the native Tunisian has not yet become French. The Bey still reigns, though with a shorn fragment of his former powers. The Bey is still the titular head of his Régence, but the French Résident Général is really the *premier fonctionnaire*, as also he is the Bey's Ministère des Affaires Étrangères.

The ancient governmental organization of the Bey has been retained with respect to interior affairs. The Caïds are the local governors or administrators of the territorial divisions and are appointed by the Bey himself. They are charged with the policing of their districts, the collecting of taxes, and are vested with a certain military authority with which to impress their tribes. Associated with the Caïds, as seconds in command, are a class called Khalifas, and as tax collectors, mere civil authorities, there are finally the Sheiks.



An Old Seal of the Bey of Tunis

An Old Seal of the Bey of Tunis

It was a bitter pill for Italy when France took the ascendancy in Tunis. The population of the city of Tunis to-day still figures 30,000 Italians and Maltese as against 10,000 French,—and ever have the French anti-expansionists called it a "*chinoiserie*." Call it what you will, Tunis, in spite of its preponderant Italian influence, is fast becoming French. It is also becoming prosperous, which is the chief end of man's existence. This proves France's intervention to have been a good thing, in spite of the fact that it accounts for seventy-five per cent. of the Italian's animosity towards his Gallic sister.

The death of S. A. Saddok-Bey in 1882, by which the Tunisian sovereign became subservient to the French Resident, was an event which caused some apprehension in France.

The new ruler, Si-Ali-Bey, embraced gladly the French suzerainty in his land that his sons might see the institutions of the Régence prosper under the benign guidance of a world power. Ali-Bey resisted nothing French,—even as a Prince,—and when he came to the Beylicale throne in 1882 he gave no thought whatever to the ultimate political independence of his country. He was ever, until his death, the faithful, liberal coöperator with the succession of Résidents Généreaux who superseded him in the control of the real destinies of Tunisia.

As a sovereign he formerly stood as the absolute ruler of a million souls, not only their political ruler, but their

religious head as well. The latter title still belongs to the Bey. (The present ruler, Mohammed-en-Nacer-Bey, came into power upon the death of his predecessor, Mohammed-el-Hadi-Bey in 1906.)

French political administration has robbed the power of the Bey of many of its picturesque and romantic accessories; but the usages of Islam are tolerated not only in the entourage of the Bey, but in all his subjects as well. This toleration even grants them the sanctity of their mosques, and does not allow the hordes of Christian tourists, who now make a playground of Mediterranean Africa from Cairo to Fez, to desecrate them by writing their names in Mohammedan sacred places. In other words, Europeans are forbidden to enter any of the Tunisian mosques save those at Kairouan.

It was Ali-Bey who achieved the task of making the masses understand that their duty was to obey the new régime; that it was a law common to them all that would assure the prosperity of the nation; and that it was he, the Bey, who was still the titular head of their religion, which, after all, is the Mussulman's chief concern in life.

Might makes right, often enough in a maladroit fashion, but sometimes it comes as a real blessing. This was the case with the coming of the French to Tunisia. A highly organized army was a necessity for Tunisia, and within the last quarter of a century she has got it. The French were far-seeing enough to anticipate the probable eventuality which might grow out of England's side-long glances towards Bizerte, and the Italian sphere of influence in Tripoli. Now those fears, not by any means imaginary ones at the time, are dead. England must be content with Gibraltar, and Italy with Sardinia. There are no more Mediterranean worlds to conquer, or there will not be after France absorbs Tripoli in Barbary, and Morocco, and the mortgages are maturing fast.

To-day the Tunisians are taxed less than they ever were

before, and are better policed, protected and cared for in every way. Their millennium seems to have arrived. France, with the coöperation of the Bey, dispenses the law and the prophets after the patriarchal manner which Saint Louis inaugurated at Carthage in the thirteenth century.

The justice of Ali-Bey and Mohammed-el-Hadi-Bey was an improvement over that of their predecessors, which was tyrannical to an extreme. The Spartan or Druidical under-the-oak justice, and worse, gave way to a formal recognized code of laws which the French authorities evolved from the heritage of the Koran, and very well indeed it has worked.

The Bey had become a veritable father of his people, and was accessible to all who had business with him, meriting and receiving the true veneration of all the Tunisian population of Turks, Jews and Arabs. He interpreted the laws of Mahomet with liberality to all, and from his palace of La Marsa dispensed an incalculable charity.

The present Bey is not an old and tried law-maker or soldier like his predecessors, and beyond a few simple phrases is not even conversant with the French language. He is a Mussulman *in toto*, but his régime seems to run smoothly, and day by day the country of his forefathers prospers and its people grow fat. Some day an even greater prosperity is due to come to Tunisia, and then the Beylicale incumbent will be covered with further glories, if not further powers. This will come when the great trade-route from the Mediterranean to the heart of Africa, to Lake Tchad, is opened through the Sud-Tunisien and Tripoli, which will be long before the African interior railway dreamed of by the late Cecil Rhodes comes into being.

French influence in Africa will then receive a commercial expansion that is its due, and another Islamic land will come unconsciously under the sway of Christian

civilization.

The obsequies of the late Bey of Tunis were an impressive and unusual ceremony. The eve before, the prince who was to reign henceforth received the proclamation of his powers at the Bardo, when he was invested with the Beylicale honours by the authorities of France and Tunisia.

The funeral of the dead Bey was more pompous than any other of his predecessors. He died at his palace at La Marsa and lay in state for a time in his own particular "Holy City," Kassar-Saïd, on the route to Bizerte, where were present all his immediate family. Prince Mohammed-en-Nacer, the Bey to be, was so overcome with a crisis of nerves that he fell swooning at the ceremony, with difficulty pulling himself together sufficiently to proceed.

The progress of the cortége towards Tunis, the capital, was through the lined-up ranks of fifty thousand Mussulmans lying prostrate on the ground. Entrance to the city was by the Sidi-Abdallah Gate, and thence to the Kasba. The Mussulman population crowded the roof-tops and towers of the entire city. The military guard of the Zouaves, the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and the Beylicale cavalry formed a contrasting lively note to the solemnity of the religious proceedings, though nothing could drown the fervent wails and shouts of "*La illah allah, Mohammed Rassone Allah! Sidi Ali-Bey!*" the Arabic substitute for "The King is dead! Long live the King!"

Before the Grande Mosquée the Unans-Muftis and the Bach-Muftis recited their special prayers, and all the dignitaries of the new court came to kiss the hand of the reigning prince, who, at the Gate of Dar-el-Bey, was saluted by the Résident Général of France.

The Tomb of the Beys, the Tourbet et Bey, is the sepulchre of all the princes of the house, each being buried in a separate marble sarcophagus, but practically in a

common grave.

A fanatical expression which was not countenanced, but which frequently came to pass nevertheless, was the crawling beneath the litter on which reposed the remains of the defunct Bey by numerous Mussulman devotees. The necromancy of it all is to the effect that he who should pass beneath the body of a dead Mussulman ruler would attain pardon for any faults ever afterwards committed. Seemingly it occurred to the authorities that it was putting a premium on crime, and so it was suppressed, and rightly enough.

The political status of the native of Tunisia to-day is similar to that of his brother of Algeria. It is incontestable that the Tunisian's status under Beylicale rule was not wholly comfortable, for the *indigènes* were ruled in a manner little short of tyrannical; but the Arab lived always in expectation of bettering his position, in spite of being either a serf or a ground-down menial. To-day he has only the state of the ordinary French citizen to look forward to, and has no hope of becoming a tyrant himself. This is his chief grievance as seen by an outsider, though indeed when you discuss the matter with him he has a long line of complaints to enumerate.

Things have greatly improved in Tunisia since the French came into control. Formerly the native, or the outlander, had no appeal from the Beylicale rule short of being hanged if he didn't like his original sentence. To-day, with a mixed tribunal of Tunisian and French officials, he has a far easier time of it even though he be a delinquent. He gets his deserts, but no vituperative punishments.

One thing the Tunisian Arab may not do under French rule. He may not leave the Régence, even though he objects to living there. The French forbid this. They keep the *indigènes* at home for their country's good, instead of sending them away. It keeps a good balance of things

anyway, and the law of the Koran as interpreted by the powers of Tunis is as good for the control of a subject people as that of the Code Napoleon.

The Tunisians, the common people of Tunis, are protégés of France, and France is doing her best to protect them and lead them to prosperity, assisted of course by the good-will and influence of the ruling Bey, whom she keeps in luxury and quasi-power.

Formerly when the native ruler did not care to be bothered with any particular class of subjects, whether they were Turks or Jews, he banished them, but the French officials consider this a superfluous prodigality, and keep all ranks at home and as contented as possible in their work of developing their country.

The one thing that the French will not have is a wholesale immigration of the Arab population of either Algeria or Tunisia. To benefit by a change of air, the *indigène* of whatever rank must have a special permission from the government before he will be allowed to embark on board ship, or he will have to become a stowaway. Very many get this special permission, for one reason or another, but to many it is refused, and for good and sufficient reasons. To the merchant who would develop a commerce in the wheat of the plateau-lands, the barley of the Sahel, or the dates of the oasis, permission is granted readily enough; and to the young student who would study law or medicine at Aix, Montpellier or Paris; but not to the able-bodied cultivator of the fields. He is wanted at home to grow up with the country.

Tunis *la ville* and Tunisia *le pays* are more mediæval and more Oriental than Algiers or Algeria. In Tunis, as in every Arab town, as in Constantinople or Cairo, you may yet walk the streets feeling all the oppression of that silence which "follows you still," and of a patient, lack-lustre stare, still regarding you as "an unaccountable, uncomfortable work of God, that may have been sent for

some good purpose—to be revealed hereafter."

The morality and the methods of the traders of the bazars and *souks* remain as Kinglake and Burton described them in their day, something not yet understood by the ordinary Occidental.

This sort of thing is at its best at Tunis. Wine, olives, dates and phosphates are each contributing to the prosperity of Tunis to a remarkable degree, and the development of each industry is increasing as nowhere else, not even in Algeria. In 1900 the vineyards of Tunisia increased over two thousand hectares, and in all numbered nearly twelve thousand hectares, of which one-quarter at least were native owned.

THE OLIVES WE EAT



OLIVE VERDALE

OLIVE PECHELINE **OLIVE ROUGET**

OLIVE de LUCQUES **OLIVE OLIVER**

The wine crop in 1900 was 225,000 hectolitres, an increase of nearly thirty per cent, over the season before, and it is still increasing. The olive brings an enormous profit to its exploiters, and the Tunisian olive and Tunisian olive oil rank high in the markets of the world. Originally ancient Lybia was one of the first countries known to produce olive oil on a commercial scale. All varieties of olive are grown on Tunisian soil. The illustration herewith marks the species.

The art of making olive oil goes back to the god Mercury. In the time of Moses and of Job the culture of the olive was greatly in repute. The exotics of the East and of Greece took the olive-leaf for a symbol, but the fighting, quarrelsome Romans would have none of it; the bay leaf and the palm of victory were all-sufficient for them.

They soon came to know its value, however, when they overran North Africa, and they exploited the olive-groves as they did the plateau wheat belt. Cæsar even nourished his armies on such other local products as figs and dates and found them strength-giving and sinew-making. North Africa has ever been a *garde-manger* of nations.

What Tunisia needs is capital, and everybody knows it. The date-palm and the olive give the greatest return of all the agricultural exploitations of the country, and after them the vine, and finally the orange-tree, the lemon-tree, the fig and the almond. Each and every one of these fruits requires a different condition of soil and climate. Fortunately all are here, and that is why Tunisia is going some day to be a gold mine for all who invest their capital in the exploitation of its soil.

The date requires a warmth and dryness of atmosphere which is found nowhere so suitable as in the Djerid and the Nefzaoua in the south. Here the soil is of just the right sandy composition, and rain is comparatively unknown. For this reason the date here flourishes better than the olive, which accommodates itself readily to the Sahel and the mountains of the north. Of the vast production of dates in this region, by far the greater part is consumed at home, the exportation of a million francs' worth per annum being but a small proportion of the whole.

Almost every newly exploited tourist ground has an individual brand of pottery which collectors rave over, though it may be the ordinary variety of cooking utensils which are common to the region. This is true of Tunis and the potteries of Nabeul.

Besides mere utilitarian articles for domestic use, the shapes and forms which these Arab pottery-workers give to their vases and jugs make them really characteristic and beautiful *objets d'art*; and they are not expensive. The loving marks of the potter's thumb are over all, and his crude ideas of form and colour are something which more highly trained craftsmen often miss when they come to manufacturing "art-pottery," as the name is known to collectors.

A *cruchon* decorated with a band of angular camels and queer zigzag rows of green or red has more of that quality called "character" than the finest *lustre* of the Golfe de Jouan or the faïence of Rouen. For five francs one may buy three very imposing examples of jugs, vases or water-bottles, and make his friends at home as happy as if he brought them a string of coral (made of celluloid, which is mostly what one gets in Italy to-day), or a carved ivory elephant of the Indies (made in Belgium of zylonite). The real art sense often expresses itself in the common, ordinary products of a country, though not every tourist seems to know this. Let the collector who wants a new fad collect "peasant pottery," and never pay over half a dollar for any one piece.

Closely allied with the pottery of Nabeul is a more commercially grand enterprise which has recently been undertaken in the Sahel south of Tunis. Not all the wealth of the vastly productive though undeveloped countryside lies in cereals, phosphates or olive-trees. There is a species of clay which is suitable, apparently, to all forms of ceramic fabrication.

In one of the most picturesque corners of the littoral, just south of Monastir, is a factory which turns out the most beautiful glazed brick and tiles that one ever cast his eye upon. The red-tiled roof of convention may now be expected to give way to one of iridescent, dazzling green, if the industry goes on prospering; and no more will the

brick-yards of Marseilles sell their dull, conventional product throughout Tunisia; and no more will the steamship companies grow wealthy off this dead-weight freight. The Italian or Maltese *balancelle* will deliver these magnificent coloured bricks and tiles of Monastir all over the Mediterranean shores; and a variety of colour will come into the landscape of the fishermen's huts and the farmhouses which the artists of a former generation knew not of.

Tunis is undergoing a great commercial development, and if the gold of Ophir is not some day found beneath its soil, many who have predicted its undeveloped riches will be surprised and disappointed.

The railways of Tunisia are not at all adequate to the needs of the country, but they are growing rapidly. When the line is finally built linking Sousse and Sfax (the service is now performed by automobile by travellers, or on camel-back; or by Italian or Arab *barques* by water, for merchandise), there will be approximately 1,700 kilometres of single-track road. Algeria with an area four times as great has but 3,100 kilometres of railway.

The railway exploitation of Tunisia has not as yet brought any great profit to its founders. The net profit after the cost of exploitation, in 1904, was but half a million francs; but it has a bright future.

Great efforts are being made by the government authorities, and the railway officials as well, towards colonizing the Régence with *French citizens*. A million and a half of francs have already been spent by the government, in addition to free grants of land, towards this colonization, and in 1904 alone land to the value of a million and a half was sold to *French* immigrants.

If one wants to travel into the interior of Tunisia, off the beaten track, say to Médenine, beyond Gabès; or to Tozeur, he should find some way of fitting himself out

with an authorization and recommendation from the French "civil control." This recommendation will be written in Arabic, and one will not be able to read it, nor will half the officials to whom it is shown *en route*; but one and all will be impressed by the official seal, the parchment, the heading "Praise to Allah the only God," and the date at the bottom,—which will read something as follows: 22 Djoumada 2d, 1307,—this being the date of the Hegira. Any document as mysterious and formal as this will accomplish much anywhere, so far as its powers as an open sesame are concerned.

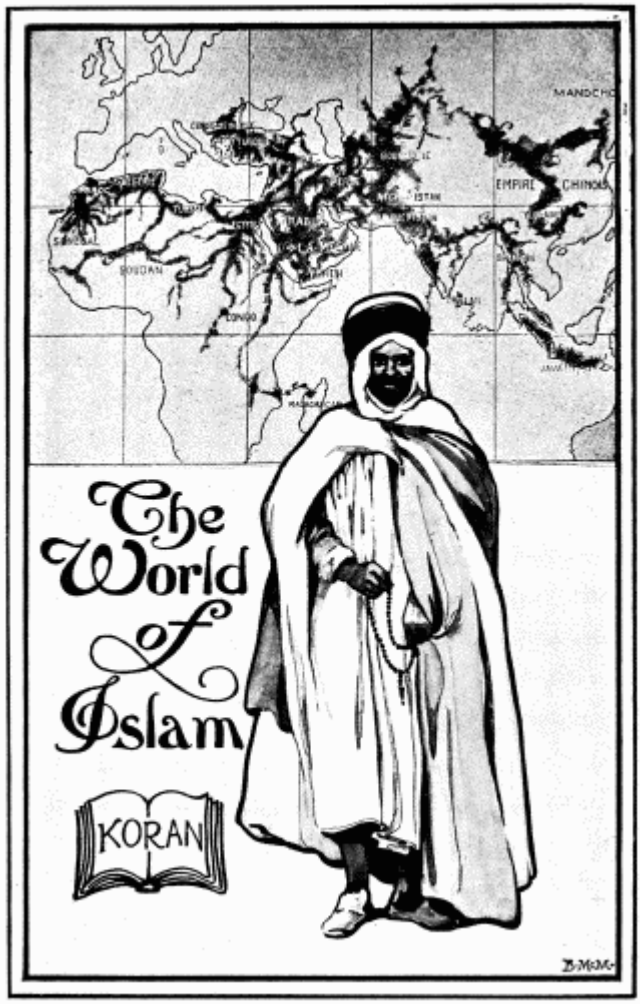
CHAPTER V

THE RELIGION OF THE MUSSULMAN

No one unless he be a Mohammedan can hope to experience the sentiments and emotions born of the Mussulman religion, or explain the fundamental principles of the Koran. It is a thing apart from all other religions, and though we may recognize many of its principles as being good and worthy, only one of the faithful can really absorb them as a part of his daily life.

The one underlying tenet which we all recognize as being something understood of all people, be they fanatics or not, is that of the purification by water. No Mussulman commences his devotions without first washing himself; he may take a conventional bath; he may wash his feet, face and hands; or he may go through a mere perfunctory sprinkling; but the form or ceremony has been complied with, and then, and then only, may he invoke Allah and his Prophet.

From the Atlantic to the Malay seas, from Turkestan to the Congo, more than two



hundred millions of men proclaim that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is his Prophet. Besides these well-defined geographical limits, the Mohammedans are everywhere. You find them in China, in Japan, in India, in

the Philippines, and scattered throughout Continental Europe. The strength of Islam is everywhere in evidence. And whether it is mere tribal warfare that brings it to our notice, or a "Holy War" against the infidels of Christians, as is really the case in Morocco at the present time, it is to be reckoned with as a power, as much so as the "yellow plague" of the Chinese and Japanese.

In all Islamic lands religion stands first. The Sultans—those of Constantinople and Fez—are religious heads even before they are accounted as chiefs of the state. And through its sub-heads and brotherhoods and secret societies, Islamism is spreading with a rapidity which most of the supposedly worldly-wise have hitherto ignored entirely.

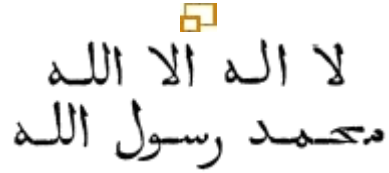
In the African possessions of France alone there are in the neighbourhood of a hundred head-centres of Islamism which, until a very recent time, preached obstruction to the foreigner—and perhaps still does so in secret. France came to know and realize this very soon, and when she took over the civil and military charge of Algeria and Tunisia, she recognized the only successful policy as being one of coöperation and not of coercion. Three hundred organizations, then,—more religious sects or communities than political divisions of a people—were kept intact in most instances, and the Sheiks who formerly got obedience from their people as the sub-religious heads of this vast organization became practically mayors, councillors and justices of the peace. It was the only thing to do, and how well it has worked is best shown by the fact that Algeria has become the most flourishing and loyal of all French colonies.

These Sheiks of Algeria and Tunisia, to whom France has granted so much complimentary power, contributed in cash, in 1890, the sum of sixteen millions of francs which they had collected of their fellow Mussulmans. A gigantic sum when it is realized that it may originally have been

paid to the Sheik in kind, a quintal of wheat, a half dozen sheep, or a few hundred kilos of dates. The Sheik doubtless makes something for himself as all this commodity passes through his hands, but what would you, official sinning is not confined to Mohammedans.

In return for his services the Arab Sheik, the emissary of the French civil control, gets a more modest salary than would his Gallic substitute, and he does his work more efficiently. His powers, with the backing of France, have been largely increased, even with his own people, and he is a part of a great political machine. He may even be a very learned person, an expert linguist in French, and the bearer of many decorations, even the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. Is it any wonder that his country is peaceful and everybody satisfied! He breaks out once and again with some childish, petulant protest and compromises the whole thing; but then some French official at headquarters makes him a present of a gross of wax candles, a bird-cage or a phonograph, and again everything runs smoothly for a space.

Before the time of Mohammed the Arabs professed diverse religions; some were Christians; some were Jews; some were fire-worshippers; and some mere idol-worshippers. Among this latter were a sect who made great idols of dough which in time became baked or very nearly petrified, and thus served the tribe of the Beni Hafa as food in time of famine. A very practical religion this!



"There is no God but Allah
And Mohammed is his prophet."

The faith of Islam is an obscure thing. It is supposedly a compound of the Christian and Hebrew religions—with variations. The sects of Islam are many, the two chief being the Shiites and the Sunnites. The former recognized Ali, the cousin of Mohammed, as the true successor of the Prophet, and collectively they form the major part of the Mussulman faith of India and Persia.

The orthodox followers of the Prophet, the faithful of Turkey, Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, have added to the precepts of the Koran the books of traditional sayings and maxims of the Prophet (a sort of Apocrypha, it would seem), and recognize as his successors the first four Kalifs—those of Bagdad, Cairo, Constantinople and Fez—as the legitimate successors of Mohammed.

This chief orthodox sect is further subdivided into Hanefites, Malikites, Shafiites and Hanabites,—foundations of various relations of the Prophet. They vary somewhat in their interpretations of the Koran and certain conclusions with regard to the "law" of the Prophet, but they are as one with regard to the precepts of purification, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and charity towards their fellow men, and against the outside world of infidels.

The Arabs and *Berbères Arabisés* of North Africa are mostly Hanefites and Malikites.

Five times a day the Mussulman prays: (i) at *fedjeur* (daybreak—before sunrise); (ii) at *eulam* (after meridian); (iii) at *dohar* (midway between noon and nightfall); (iv) at *aseur* (just after sunset, when his day of labour is finished); and (v) at *mogreb* (when night actually falls). There is sometimes a sixth prayer at *eucha* (supper-time).

Not all professing Mussulmans pray five times a day. There are backsliders in the Mussulman religion as in other religions; but both in the cities and the countryside the truly devout, singly, or even in groups of a score or a

hundred at a time, make their "sunset devotions" with regularity and impressiveness. The devout Arab will dismount from his horse, mule or camel, will come out of his tent or house, and will even alight from a railway train or diligence if opportunity offers, and say his sunset prayer in the open air. The Mussulman does not invariably need the stimulus of a temple to express himself towards his God. In that respect he is certainly far ahead of some of the other sects found throughout the world.

The spectacle of the Mussulman's sunset prayer in the desert—standing barefooted on his little rug or carpet and facing the east and Mecca—is impressive beyond words; and not even the most skeptical would deny to the simple faith of Islam the virtues granted to many religions more ceremoniously complicated. The ceremonies in the mosques are less impressive than those in the open air.

The following résumé of the symbolism of the eight positions of the Mussulmans' prayer explains the attitudes and postures that one remarks everywhere in the world of Islam.

I. Standing. "I offer my God, with sincere heart and with my face towards Mecca, two *rakôh* (prayers).

II. Still standing, but with open palms raised to each side of the face, the thumbs touching the ears—"God is Great!"

III. Still standing; with the right hand crossing the left over the chest, he repeats, "Holiness to Thee, oh, God! Praise be to





The Eight Positions of the Praying Mussulman

Thee! Great is Thy name!"—and other prayers from the Koran.

IV. Still standing; the body inclined forward and the hands, with fingers separated, placed upon the knees. "I extol the Sanctity of the Great God!"

V. Falling upon the knees—"God is Great!"

VI. Still on the knees he makes a bow (three times repeated), the forehead and nose touching the ground, "I extol the Sanctity of my God, the Most High!"

This practically finishes one *rakôh*, but there are usually added certain recitations from the first chapter of the Koran, with perhaps a repetition of the postures.

VII. Before finally leaving the place of prayer the act of witness, *Tashabhud*, is given. He raises the forefinger of his right hand and repeats: "I affirm that there is no God but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God."

VIII. The last position is the *Munjat*, or supplication,

when are repeated certain suitable verses of the Koran.

Christ enters into the Mussulman religion as one of the Prophets of God. They believe that Christ was, before the coming of Mohammed, the greatest of all Prophets.

All good Mussulmans recite the prayers of their beads, just as all good Catholics say their chaplets. The Mussulman has a string of ninety-nine beads, each standing for one of the ninety-nine perfections of Allah. This rosary is often elaborate and costly, interspersed here and there with jewels; but more often than not, even with wealthy Mussulmans, it is a string of crude wooden beads. The faith of Islam is a simple one, not a showy one.

The Friday prayer at the mosques is one of the events to see in a Mussulman country. Public prayer is a social event with Mohammedans, as it is with many Christians. Soon after the sun has marked high noon, and while the siesta is still the chief blessing with many, the throng follows the first *zoual* or call of the *muezzin*.

Everything is burning and brilliant under an ardent southern sun, and a scintillating, dazzling reflection comes from each whitewashed wall until one is almost blinded. After this the cool shadows of the mosque are most refreshing. Barefooted the Mussulman throng threads its way among the myriad pillars of the court and enters the sanctuary where daylight filters dimly through a sieve of iron-latticed windows.

Praying men are everywhere,—men of the town, and nomad Arabs from the desert whose business has brought them thither. The women are all at the cemetery talking scandal, for except on special occasions, the Mussulman women are not admitted to the Holy Day (Friday) prayers in the mosques. This is in accordance to the law of the Prophet. Under a great dome a ruddier, more brilliant light showers down on the students and professors who psalm the verses of the Koran in a monotonous wail; while still

farther to the rear is the infants' school, whose pupils repeat their lessons in crackling singsong voices all day long to a pair of bearded, turbaned elders. Here and there, backed up against a pillar, a *taleb* recites his litany to the Prophet. All these voices blend in a murmur undistinguishable from any other conglomerate sound, except that it is manifestly human.

Suddenly, from high above, on the gallery of the minaret, rings out the *muezzin's* second call to prayer, and like the reverberant light, it seems to filter down from the unknown.

With face towards Mecca the *imam* reads





The Muezzin's Call to Prayer

the Khotba, a long, dreary prayer of exhortation, but no more monotonous than the cut and dried sermon which one mostly gets in Christian churches. The *imam* is not a priest as is known of Christendom; the religion of Islam has no regular clergy; he is simply the wisest elder among the personnel of the mosque.

All through the service, as indeed at all times, a great calm reigns throughout every Mohammedan mosque. At the end of the last exhorting couplet issuing from between

the lips of the *imam* a naïve joy, as of a relief from a great oppression, spreads over the assembled faithful and all rush for the open, as do congregations of other faiths. One religion is not so very different from another after all. It is only a matter of belief, not of the mode of expressing one's adherence to that belief.

"*May peace be thine, O Mohammed, Prophet of God. Ruler of Mecca and Medina and Lord of all Mussulmans now and always.*"

This finishes the service of the mosque.

From the opaque obscurity of the maze of the mosque's interior one comes suddenly again into the light of day. To a burning African landscape from the humidity of a cloister.

Woman's position in Islam is peculiar. It is not according to our notions of what is right and proper, and there is no looked-for or hoped-for emancipation to be thought of. The question is both a social and a religious one. Those few Europeans who have really studied the harem as an institution have found, however, that its establishment and continuance is a plan that works well, and that the majority of these supposedly unhappy wives really love their husbands, and their destiny. If this is so, what business is it of ours to criticize the conduct of the *ménage* of the Arab or the Turk. The Prophet himself said that woman was the jewel and the perfume of this world.

Theoretically the Mussulman idea is that man is the superior creature physically, and that it is his business alone to mingle and rub shoulders with the world, leaving his wives, members of the fragile sex, to raise his family, embellish his life and console him in time of grief. All other things apart, surely these are good enough principles for anybody to found domestic bliss upon. And these are the principal tenets of the domestic creed of the Moslem. He is often not the villain he is painted. To continue the

words of the Prophet—Mohammed said one day to his companions: "Would you know the most valuable possession of man? It is, then, an honest woman. She charms the eye, and is obedient, and guards his reputation intact during his absence from home." Really the Islamic faith goes a bit farther, for it counsels man to "cloister his wife as a prevention of jealousy and doubt, the mortal poisons, the terrible unpitying destroyers of conjugal quietude." This, too, seems good advice, like many other of the precepts of the Koran.

Many of these Arab women were born within the harem's walls, and know not any other modes of life as preferable to their own. They regard the daily round of liberty of the European woman as an unreal, undesirable state. The harem has been the theatre of their joys since infancy, and they have become so habituated to it that their life of seclusion becomes a second nature. They would not flee the sill of the great doorway into the outer world if they could, and their only change of *locale* is to pass from the harem of the husband of their mother to that of their spouse. In the harem the Arab woman is cared for with an unthought-of luxury. All the goods and chattels that their husband values most go to enrich the harem walls and floors. The harem is a sumptuous, glorious apartment compared to the simplicity with which the master of the house surrounds himself in his own quarters.

It is the opinion of that indefatigable traveller and student of exotic things, Edmond de Amicis, that the Arab concedes nothing to the European in his chivalrous treatment of woman. "No Arab dares lift an offending hand against a woman in public." "No Arab soldier, even in the tumult of attack, would think of maltreating even the most insolent of womenkind." And yet Europeans of most nationalities have been known to do both these things.

In her cloister, or to be more exact, in her boudoir, the Arab woman, and particularly the mother, receives the

most respectful homage and solicitude from all the household. According to the Koran the children are admonished to respect the persons of those who bore them, and a verbal declaration of the Prophet is set down as: "A child may gain Paradise only by following in the footsteps of its mother."

The educated and advanced Arabs of the towns have done much to disabuse the public of any false preconceived ideas concerning Arab womenfolk. Contrary to common belief the Arab woman is often the intellectual and social equal of her spouse. It was only the absurd jealousy of the old-school Mussulmans that annihilated for ever the faculties of their wives.

The portrait gallery of celebrated Mussulman women is not large, but one does not forget Zobeïdah, who inspired and aided the illustrious Haroun-Al-Rachid. Islam is not in its decadence, but its sponsors are awakening to the fact that they must keep abreast of the times.

The Friday promenade of the Mussulman woman of the towns to the cemetery is her only outing, the only day off allowed her. She makes as much of it as possible, but it is a sad proceeding at best.

The Arab tomb is, generally speaking, a thing of simplicity, a simple slab bearing the Arab words for the sentiment "*Hic jacet*." The exception is in the *marabout* tombs or *koubas*, which are often monumental, though of comparatively small dimensions, well built, symmetrical, and surmounted by a dome or cupola.

The word *marabout* signifies first of all a holy man of the Mohammedan sect, a *réligieux* in fact, one whose vows, life and service is devoted to his God. Furthermore the same word is applied to the tiny mosque-like tombs distributed throughout the Arab peopled lands, which are served by a *marabout*. The two entities have become somehow indistinguishable as to name.

The *mosque-marabout* is practically a tiny house of worship, its four box-like walls surmounted by one great dome or others smaller, with never, never a minaret, the invariable adjunct of a full-grown mosque. The quaint, kindly welcome of the marabout of Algeria and Tunisia will long remain in the memory of those who have come under its influence, as did the author in the course of some months' sojourn in a little desert oasis, peopled only by *indigènes* and the small garrison of a French military post. An excursion to visit the marabout in his humble dwelling, some kilometres away under another little clump of palm-trees, was an almost weekly occurrence. Conversation was difficult, but we all sat and looked at each other and made signs, and nodded, and clasped hands, and again nodded a farewell, the white-clad marabout's kindly, bearded face lighting up meanwhile as if in appreciation of the glimmer of light from the outside world which had filtered through to his tranquil abode. Nothing ever more belied the words





A Marabout

of a proverb than a marabout. The French have a remark in which he is made out an ugly, uncouth man: "*Affreux comme un marabout*." The illustration herewith belies these words.

If you are a clergyman of the Christian church, and there are many "conducted tourists" of that order in Algeria to-day, you need have no hesitancy in making your profession of faith known to the marabout. Say simply that you are a

"*marabout d'Aïssa*." He will recognize and respect your religion, which is more than the Confucian or Buddhist will, who simply rolls his tongue in his cheek and smiles blandly. The Mohammedan's religion is a very plausible and a very well-working one. He has no false gods or idols. That's a good thing of itself. And superstition plays a very small part therein. That's another good thing. The marabout is not a Mussulman priest, but a member, merely, of a religious order,—a monk virtually, and, as there are communities of monkish orders elsewhere, there are also whole tribes in Africa composed entirely of marabouts. They are looked up to by the Mussulman faithful as shepherds of the flock in the absence of a specially credentialled priest or father.

The marabouts are most numerous in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, though their vocation properly belongs to the entire Mussulman religion.

A whole tribe of the sect of marabouts, under the pretext of wishing to be free to practise their rites away from worldly contaminating influences, voluntarily exiled themselves centuries ago in the Atlas range bordering the northern limits of the Sahara. This was in 1050. From this procedure these religionists grew to such power and influence that they became virtually political rulers as well. They conquered the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco, and even sought to conquer Spain, emigrating to the southern peninsula in vast numbers, only to be chased from there to seek a refuge in Majorca, which they were able to do because of the bounty of the Mussulman King of Cordova, to whom the suzerainty belonged. Here they were known under the name of *Almoravides*, and to them was due the invention of the Spanish money known as *maravédis*.

The marabout is caricatured a little, too, in the name given to a fat-bellied copper coffee-pot frequently met with in the Mediterranean countries. Balzac describes the *batterie de cuisine* of one of his characters as consisting of

un chaudron, un gril, une casserole et trois marabouts.

One of the greatest Mussulman saints, and the one who is the most frequently invoked, was Sidi-el-Hadji-Abd-el-Kader-el-Djilali. His tomb is at Bagdad, but all Algeria is strewn with *koubas* in his honour. He is particularly the patron saint of the blind, but the lame and the halt invoke his aid as well, for he has the reputation of being the most potent and efficacious of all Mussulman saints. A marabout is generally in charge of these *koubas*, as he is with the proper tombs of other holy men. The marabout tombs, the *koubas* and the mosques are all Mussulman shrines of the same rank so far as their being holy, sanctified places is concerned.

The pilgrimage to Mecca from all Mohammedan lands is the event of their lives for the faithful who participate therein. The pilgrims going from Algeria and Tunisia are yearly becoming greater in numbers. It is as queer a composite caravan as one has ever seen which lines up at the wharves of Bona or Sfax, there to take ship for the East. By this time it has ceased to be a caravan, and has become a personally conducted excursion. The return is quite as impressive as the departure. It is then that a sort of cantata is sung or chanted, running something like the following:—

First the waiting folk on shore shout out,—

Then the pilgrims reply:—

"O pilgrims from the house of God
Hast thou seen the Prophet of God."

Then the pilgrims reply:—

"We have seen! We have seen!
And we have left him in the House of God:
There he makes his devotions,
There he reads his holy books."

The marabouts then endorse it all,—

"Our Seigneur Abraham is the beloved of God,
Our Seigneur Moses is the mouthpiece of God,
Our Seigneur Aïssa[1] is the spirit of God,
But our Seigneur Mohammed is the Prophet of God."

[1] The name the Arabs give Jesus Christ.

The memory of a Mussulman who has departed this life is not put lightly aside with the rising of the next day's sun, but a real devotion, if a silent one, goes out towards the departed for many months, and perhaps years, after his corpse is first laid out on its mat of straw in the courtyard of his domicile or before his tent.

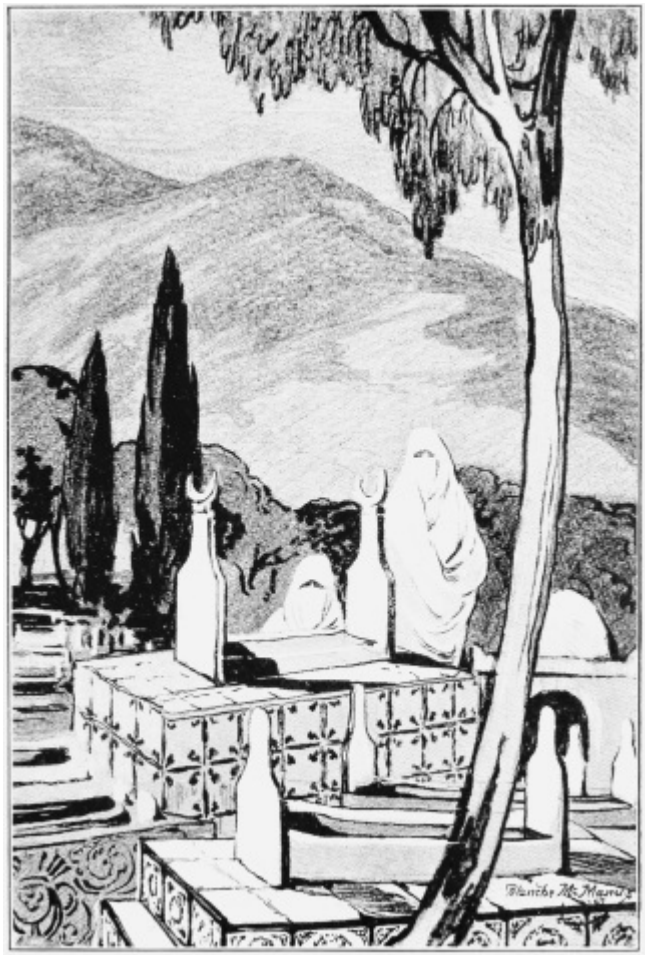
At this moment the vague, rigid form compels the devotion of all who were near and dear to him in life. In soft cadence they bewail his death, and prayers of the utmost fervour are sent upward on his behalf. All is calm, solemn, and well-ordered, there is no hysterical excitement, no wailing clamour, and no jealous quarrellings among the heirs.

Above all others one voice cries out a sad voluminous chant. It is the "*Borda*," the funeral elegy of a departed soul.

An Arab funeral is a solemn affair, though not necessarily imposing. A little group of indeterminate numbers lead off, then four others carrying a litter, covered with a flowing white cloth, on their shoulders. All this is usually in the first hour after sunrise. On a little plateau of desert sand, just above the deep-dug grave, the corpse is finally placed, the company ranged about in a semicircle for one last, long, lingering prayer. The face of the corpse is turned always towards the holy city, Mecca, and when the body has been lowered into its eternal sandy cradle, and covered with a layer of sun-baked clay, and then more sand, three tiny palms are planted above. They soon wither and die, or they live, accordingly as chance favours or not,

but the thing is that they be planted.

This is the end; nothing remains but for the women to come along after a decent interval and weep, never by any chance missing a Friday.



In an Arab Cemetery

CHAPTER VI

ARCHITECTURE OF THE MOSQUES

GOTHIC architecture is expressive of much that a mixed or transitory style lacks, but again the Roman, or Lombard, or the later architecture of the Renaissance, have their own particular cachet quite as recognizable and quite as well defined.

Mohammedan architecture, so different in motif and treatment, is quite as expressive and, in many ways, quite as civilized as the architectural forms of Europe, and possesses in addition a certain feeling which baked clay and plaster suggests better than all other materials. A feeling which is often entirely wanting in cut stone when used to reproduce animal and plant forms.

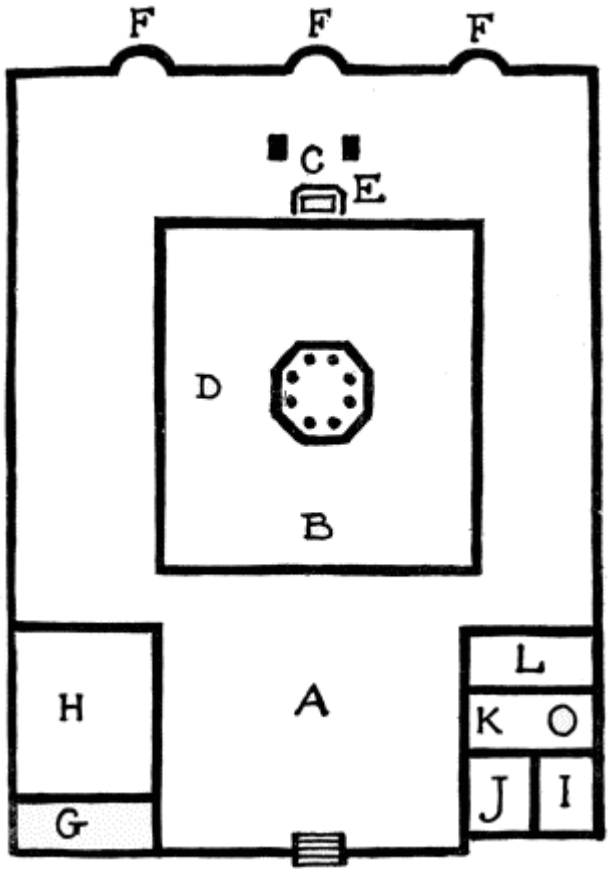
Saracenic, Assyrian, Persian and Byzantine architectural details are all of them beautiful, if bizarre, but the Mohammedan architecture of the Moors outranks them all for sheer appeal, fantastic and less consistent though it be. Fantastic it is, but often in a simple, suggestive way, depending upon design and proportion rather than profuse decoration. This is why the mosques of Kairouan in Tunisia, or those of Tlemcen in Algeria are even more interesting than the great Mosque of Saint Sophia, or the palace corridors of the Alhambra itself, which are, in fact, but a mixture of several styles. Terra-cotta and baked clay are all right in their way, but their way is the Mohammedan builders' way, not that of the modern school architects who simulate cut stone in the same plastic products, and build up Turkish baths in palatial twenty-story Broadway hotels with the pagan decorations of ancient Rome, when what they had in mind all the time was the fountained courtyard of a Mohammedan mosque —not by any means a symbolism of paganism. Our new-school architects of the Western world sadly muddle things

at times. Moorish arabesques do not mingle well with the palmer's shells of the Italian Renaissance and the English fan-lights of the brothers Adam.

The word mosque comes properly from the word *mesgid*, signifying place of adoration. The Italians make of the word, *moscheta*; the Spaniards, *meschita*; and the French, *mosquée*. All these variations are met with in North Africa. It is well to recognize them, for both Algeria and Tunisia are more "mixed" in their language and institutions than any other lands yet become affected of twentieth-century tourists. The mixture is perhaps the more likable because of its catholicity. It is certainly more interesting; but school-board and self-taught linguists will need all their wits about them to make the most of the soft, sweet tongue of a desert Arab who lisps first in French, then in Spanish and then in Italian, with perhaps an "*Oh, yes!*" or an "*All right!*" here and there. He modestly reserves his own Arabic for an exclusive harangue among his intimates.

The conventional type of mosque is undoubtedly reminiscent of the Greek basilica, but in every way more amply disposed. The plan herewith is the accepted conventional type of great mosque before it got crowded up in the cities. To-day in most large towns and cities the mosque has been shorn of many of its attributes, leaving only the inner sanctuaries remaining.

The plainness of the exterior of the mosques of North Africa is no indication of the gorgeousness of their interiors. An imposing sobriety of exterior, of all the mosques of Islam



Ground Plan of a Mosque

A Outer Court. B Inner Court or Sahn. C Pulpits on which the Koran is placed. Fountain. E Tribune from which the Muezzin calls to prayer. F Three praying-niche Horses and camels. H Strangers. I Bath. J Drinking-fountain. K Well.

in the Moghreb, from Tlemcen to Kairouan, invariably clothes dentelled sculpture and mouldings, fine rugs and hangings, and a labyrinth of architectural fantasies possessed by no other class of civil or religious edifices extant.

The architecture of the mosques of Algeria and Tunisia, as of those of Constantinople and Cairo, is the apotheosis

of a mysterious symbolism, at which the infidel can but wonder and speculate. He will never understand it, at least he will never feel it as does the Mussulman himself. It is unfortunate that we outsiders are thought of as unbelievers, but so it is. One does not forget that even twentieth-century Arab gamins at Suez and Port Saïd revile the Christian with their guttural:

"*Ya Nasrani*
Kalb awani!"

This venerable abuse means nothing more or less than:

"O Nazarene
O dog obscene!"

This comes down from tradition, for the same thing is recounted in Percy's "Reliques." There, in a certain anecdote, a knight calls his Mussulman opponent "*unchristian hound*," to which the retort courteous was given as, "christen dogge."

Of all the dainty features of a Moorish mosque none appeals to the artist as does the minaret. Minaret is the Arab name for a chandelier, lantern, signal fire, and finally the slim, graceful tower of purely Arab origin. Properly speaking it is in the application to the Mussulman place of worship, the mosque, that we know the minaret in its most poetic form. In its architectural sense, however, it is that slim, graceful, arrow-like tower which is so frequently a component part of a Moorish or Byzantine structure.

The Hebrews had a similar word for a tower which performed similar functions—*menorah*; and the Chaldeans the word *menora*; while, finally, the Syrians adopted *menortho*. Of the exotic origin of the word there is no doubt, but a minaret is first of all something more than a mere tower. It must be of special proportions, and it must be an adjunct to a more pretentious structure. Never is a

minaret a thing apart.

For a comparison between the Byzantine minaret and that born of the ingenuity of the Moorish builder, the words of Théophile Gautier must be accepted as final: "The minarets of Saint Sophia (Constantinople) have not the elegance nor *sveltesse* of those of the Moor."

The minaret of the mosque of the Sultan Kalaûn at Cairo is perhaps the most splendid of all contemporary works. Its height approximates two hundred feet, and though the mosque itself is ruined, its firm, square minaret, brilliant with all the fantasy of the best of Mussulman art, is to-day quite the most splendid example of its class above ground.

The minaret of El Bardenei, also at Cairo, runs the former a close second.

The square, dazzling white and more severe, though none less beautiful, minarets of Tunis and Algiers seem almost as if they were another species from the Cairene type. In reality they are not. They are one and the same thing, differing in no essential constructive element, but only in detail of decoration.

The Arabs, seemingly, have a horror of symmetry. No two structures in one street are on the same building line or at the same angle, and the sky-lines of even the Frenchified cities of Algiers and Tunis are as bizarre as that of lower New York, though not as elevated.

The Arab's idea of a street building line is most rudimentary, but French engineers are helping him out, and boulevards, avenues and streets are being laid out, and roads and alleys straightened as opportunity offers. The Arab looks on stolidly and doesn't in the least seem to object, though it answered him well enough previously that the doorway of his favourite mosque should be half-hidden and almost obstructed by the jutting veranda of a Moorish café, a sheep butcher's, a silversmith's, or a red and yellow awninged bath-house, and these, be it noted, were all set at

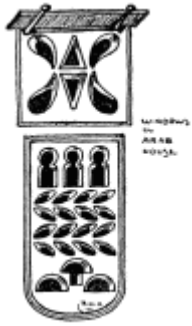
varying angles and inclinations.

A *moucharabia* is a component of every Arab, Moorish or Turkish structure of any pretence. Its name sounds as though it might have some relation to a fly-screen, and in a certain sense it is that, though not an impenetrable one. It is more like the choir-screen of a Renaissance church.

In reality the *moucharabia* is a lattice or *grille* of wood or even iron, sometimes ornate and finely carved, and sometimes merely a barred gate or door.

When these fine latticed *grilles* are taken away by the housebreaker, and offered the dealer in curios, they take on an exalted value that the original owners never knew. It is difficult to buy old-time woodwork anywhere, whether one is searching out Chippendale chairs in Yorkshire, *panétiers* in Provence, or *moucharabias* in the Mitidja; but the Arab curio dealer can give the Christian or Hebrew antique dealer of other lands a good fair start and then beat him as to the profits he can draw from the inexperienced tourist collector. One thing you may be sure of, Arab or Moorish antiques are seldom imitations, and though the "asking price" of a *moucharabia* may (at first) be excessive, and the "talking points" of dubious value, the article in question is probably authentic, and actually could not be duplicated by the workmen of to-day for a similar price.





A
Window in an Arab House

The native dealer of Tunis or Algiers will ask two or three hundred francs for a fine example of a *moucharabia*, all green and red and gold, but he will probably take seventy-five if you will spend the day with him arguing it out.

The little temples or shrines called *koubas* scattered all over Algeria are not unlike the pagan temples of the Greeks in their general proportions. Literally the word in Arabic means a square house, though indeed it was the patriarch Abraham who supposedly set the conventional design upon which all others have since been built. Two workmen, one a Greek and another a Copt, built the first *kouba* at Mecca, and it was out of this that the typical Arab mosque grew, as distinct from the frequently more splendid mosques of the Byzants.

The Arabs had no religious art previous to their adoption of the faith of Mahomet. The true Mussulman thinks that the form and style of the mosque and all its dependencies was preconceived in the heavens, before even the creation of man, and that that poor mortal was only formed in the image of God when everything was ready and in place. With what success man has made use of his opportunities each must judge for himself.

The *mosque-marabout* is often a monument which marks a holy place, the tomb, for instance, of a celebrated

marabout or holy man. That erected at Algiers, above the remains of the Marabout Sidi-Brahim, famous because of



his defence of a French captain and his soldiers in the Algerian warfare of 1845, is as admirable and worthy a sepulchral monument as one will find in any land.

The religious architecture of Islam, as far as its symbolism is concerned, is a thing that will never be understood by the Christian. A mosque to most people is simply a public monument, a thing of domes and minarets and many columns. The winter bird of passage at Cairo thinks it a great inconvenience that he should be made to put on a pair of *babouches* over his shoes in order to enter, forgetting that it is a Holy Place and that one of the tenets of the Mussulman religion forbids walking rough-shod over the rugs and carpets of a place of worship. In Algeria the practice is similar, except that the “infidel” simply

removes his shoes and enters stocking-footed. In Tunisia, with the exception of the mosques at Kairouan, none but the Mussulman may pass their thresholds.

The fine Moorish architecture which radiated from Granada in the golden days of its best epoch has in our day sadly degenerated. The primitive Arab of Africa intermingled with the Moors and absorbed to a certain degree the pure fundamental principles of Moorish architecture. The town-dwelling Arab built his mosques and his houses, during the last two centuries, less luxuriously perhaps than his predecessors (and often with the aid of Italian workmen), but he did not debase the Moorish formulæ. What he kept of constructive elements was pure, the debasement has only come in later years with the additions and reconstructions incident to keeping pace with the times. This is where the Arab architect beats the European at the same game.

The religious edifices of Islam, whether the simple *kouba* of a saint, or the elaborate mosque of the city, possess always a certain infallible form. The fundamental principles are the same, whether one takes an example from the Holy Land, or from one within sight of Gibraltar.

In Arabia, in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria this Arab expression of the architecture of the Moors predominates, but in Persia, Turkestan and in the Ottoman Empire there is a certain specious Byzantine cachet, which, if not actually a debasement, is a qualifying note which differentiates the two varieties. The Arab variety has always been, however, the pattern-mould from which has sprung forth the Islamic religious architecture of to-day.

Before the birth of Islamism, Arabia, properly called, had no great artistic monuments. The first mosque of magnificent proportions was erected in the year 20 of the Hegira (642 A.D.) under the Khalifat of Omar—this was the mosque of Hmrou at Cairo.

On this model many others were afterwards constructed, with variations of little importance. These comprise for the most part the mosques of the Arabian peninsula, of Egypt, of Africa, and of Andalusia. The most famous of this class are those at Mecca and Medina; that of Iba Touloum at Cairo; that of Djama Ez-Zitouna at Tunis; those at Mahdia and Gafsa; of Okba Ibm Maffî at Kairouan; and El Mansourah at Tlemcen. Besides these most of the mosques of Morocco are in the same style, as is also the grand mosque of Cordova in Spain.

Omar's great mosque at Jerusalem was built at the inspiration of that Kalif. He said to the Patriarch of Jerusalem after one of the periodical religious quarrels of the time: "Show me a place, then, where I may build a mosque, where Mussulmans may henceforth assemble for their prayers without coming into contact with those of the Christian cult." Then finally grew up the mosque of Omar, the Khalif himself working with the common labourers. Thus came into being the mosque commonly reputed to be the most beautiful in existence to-day.

We know that the minarets of the mosques were primarily instituted that the *muezzins* might make their call to prayer in full view and hearing of the faithful. It is to the honour of the Khalif el-Walid that the first of these svelt, sky-piercing towers was raised, and its name derived from the Arab *menora*.

The minaret plays a preponderant role in all Arab art, and is the distinguishing characteristic between Arab and Moorish architecture. In the Moghreb (that is the Barbary States and Spain, bordering on the western Mediterranean) the form of the minaret is nearly always quadrangular, and the tiny terrace or platform high above supports, invariably, a smaller pavilion whose roof is usually composed of four sloping sides which, in turn, is surmounted by the conventional three balls and crescent of copper, silver or even gold. The four sides forming the

base of this square tower are sometimes of carved stone, or faïence, or of rough-hewn stone covered with plaster, which is afterwards carved or gilded.

Amongst the most beautiful of these minarets of the Moghreb there is an exquisite delicacy of design, a remarkable warmth of colour and an elegant, piquant suggestion of daintiness as they rise up into the unalterable azure of the African skies. Of this class are those of Ez-Zitouna and the Kasba at Tunis; of Sidi-bou-Medine and Mansourah at Tlemcen; those at Tangier and Fez; and of course that of the Giralda at Seville. The Giralda is assuredly one of the most beautiful types of Arabic-Andalusian architecture, and was built in the twelfth century during the reign of the Sultan Yacoub-el-Nansourd.

In Egypt, quaint and mysterious as the roof-tops and minarets are to the untrained eye, they possess no systematic regularity of form or feature. They are of all dimensions and proportions. The gamut runs from the square to the hexagon, to the octagon, and to the circle even, with always numerous openings too small to be called windows, and above all a plethora of finely chiselled stone.

This résumé outlines the brilliant art of the builder of the Arab mosque, beginning with the twelfth century in Spain, the thirteenth in the Moghreb, and finally the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth in Egypt and Syria.

Beyond the pale of these perfect types are the Perso-Byzantine varieties of the Ottoman Empire; and still farther east, types which are quite beyond the scope of these pages.

CHAPTER VII

POETRY, MUSIC, AND DANCING

THE Arab is not wholly a silent, morose individual. He has his joys and sorrows, and his own proper means of expressing them like the rest of us. Here in Mediterranean Africa he has kept his traditions alight, and the darkness of the historic past is only relative, even though the Arab does belong to the unprogressive school.

The Arab countries, as the French, the only real masters the Arab has ever had, know them, are a broad belt bordering upon the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, from the Dardanelles to the Straits of Gibraltar; and comprise Arabia proper, the Holy Land, Egypt, Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Throughout this region the influence is wholly French, whatever may be the destinies of the various political divisions. Turkey holds the custom-house arrangements, but the language spoken with the outsider is French. Egypt is garrisoned by the English, and its prosperity of to-day was, it is true, born of Lord Cromer's English administration, but for all that the whole complexion is French, the great Suez Canal, the railways and the hotels. Tripoli in Barbary is Turkish, but the trading steamships, the hotels and most of the merchants, are French. Tunisia and Algeria are French through and through, and Morocco may yet become French.

All these Arab lands are peopled with natives of the same tongue, speech and sentiments, though they belong to widely differing tribes.

First of all, be it understood that the Arab of North Africa is no wild, savage, untamed manner of man, but virtually a highly civilized one, so far as tradition goes, whether he be Berber, Kabyle or Nomad. The Arabs' popular literature, their tales, their legends, their proverbs and their songs, are known to be many and great by all who have studied the folk-lore of the ancients. Furthermore they occupy a field which has been but slightly explored save in the "Thousand and One Nights"

and certain other works more speculative than popular.

It was Solomon who said that speech was a passing wind, and that to harness it one must know how to write. The Arab writes from right to left, and uses no capitals nor punctuation. The Arab knows two forms of writing: *neskhi*, that belonging to the common people; and the *diouani*, of officialdom. The Arabs and Moors of Spain of other days wrote with a beauty and elegance which to-day has sadly degenerated among all the tribes.

A good handwriting is greatly in honour among the Arabs. "Fine writing augments one's reputation for truth," says Qalqachandi. The Arab writes with a sort of bamboo or rose-tree switch, which he cuts into a point, and he has never yet heard of a steel or gold pen, nor suspected that a goose-quill would answer. For ink he burns sheep's wool, adds gum-water to the cinders, and makes a concoction which, for his purpose, answers well enough. We who are rather particular about such things will not care for its colour or quality.

The Arab, as a matter of fact, writes but little, and composes his letters after traditional types and forms. Formalities have a prominent place. He "begs to intimate" and "has the honour to be" all through the list, until one doubts if he ever can get the kernel out of the nut, and the subject-matter is treated in cyclopædic form.

If the Arab who writes is "classy," and if he occupies a sufficiently high social position, he seals his letter with a cachet, as did our own forefathers, and he also imprints a mark or cipher for a signature; otherwise he signs himself "Ali-Ben something or other, the poor-devil-of-a-sheep-herder-in-the-mountains-of-the far-away-never-never-land." According to the briefness of the signature you are thus enabled to judge of the importance of a letter without reading it through.

This doesn't matter to the Arab, for he has a very poor

idea of the value of time or even of the passing of time. His notions with regard to many things may only be described as vague. If he is ill, he goes to a doctor, perhaps even a French one, if he lives near the towns, but immediately the practitioner begins interrogating him he asks: "Why is it, you, who are a savant, do not know what is the matter with me without asking all these questions?" Many of us have thought the same about our own doctors!

The Arabs have a sort of "Jo Miller Joke Book," or "Old Farmer's Almanac," containing many antiquated sayings. Here is an example:

A man asked confidingly of another, "Will you lend me fifty piastres?"

"But I don't know you," was the reply.

"It is for that reason that I ask," said the seeker after unearned wealth.

Pretty bad, even in the translation; but our own comic almanacs and Sunday supplements do considerably worse sometimes.

The Arab's proverbs, or sayings, have become classic, and he has perverted or perhaps simplified many of the sayings of other tongues:

"All is not water that flows down-hill."

"Not every roof is a heaven."

"Not every house is a House of God."

The sentiments expressed by the above are not possible of being misunderstood, and our own similar sayings are not improvements. Chief among Arab tales and proverbs are those concerning horses and mules. "The fortresses of the Arabs are their horses and guns."

The folk-lore and tales, current mostly by word of mouth, of the Arab of the Sahara is apparently very abundant. Each tribe, nay, each encampment, one meets on the march has its Tusitala or teller of tales, as do the South

Sea Island communities. Tales, legends, traditions, fables and even accounts of travel make up the repertory of the Arab story-teller; besides which there are songs and chants, religious and profane, many of them perhaps dating back before the days of Mohammed.

The mule has ever been the butt of Arab proverb and legend. There is a story of a wood-cutter of the forests of Kabylie who, having left his mule tied to a tree in a half-hidden spot, found it gone when he went to look for it after finishing his day's work. Two robbers—just plain horse-thieves—had come up previously, and one had made away with the mule, leaving its bridle and saddle harnessed on the other fellow who remained behind.

"Who are you?" asked the wood-chopper, "and where is my mule?" as he came up.

"I was your mule, good master; years ago I insulted my parents and God turned me into a mule."

The wood-chopper, astonished, knew not what to say or do.

"But I will stay with you always," said the thieving rascal, merely to gain time.

"Well, I don't want you; you are free," the woodman replied generously.

Three days later, in the public market-place, he saw and recognized his mule in the hands of a trader. He did not dare claim him, or rather he could not make his claim good, so he tweaked the mule's ears and shouted at him: "So you've been insulting your parents again, have you? Well, to serve you right, may you find a harsher master than I."

Another favourite subject of Arab story and proverb makers is that of the farmer and his crops. The following is a fair sample:—

Satan appeared one day before an Arab sowing his fields, introduced himself and said that half the world

belonged to him, and that he claimed half the coming crop.

"Very well," said the labourer, "which half? That which is above ground or that which is below?"

The Devil was no agriculturist, he could not tell pumpkin seeds from turnip seeds, so he said simply that he wouldn't be put off with the roots. That what he wanted was that which grew above ground. On the day of the harvest the Devil came around for his share—and got it, turnip tops, good for greens, if boiled, but otherwise food for cattle.

The next sowing time he came again. This time he claimed that which was below ground—and got it. The Arab had sown buckwheat, of which all Arabs are very fond.

Furious and speechless with anger, the Devil took flight and vowed he would have no more to do with the race. This tale bears some resemblance to the European legend of St. Crepin and the Devil, which the peasant of Mid-France tells regularly to his family twice each year, once at the sowing and once at the reaping. It is a classic. Query: Did the Arab steal his tale from the Auvergnat, or did the latter appropriate it from the former?

The native music of all African tribes is of slight importance. It never reaches a great height. It is simply a piercing, dismal wail, and since it is invariably produced by instruments which look as if they could produce nothing else, this is not to be wondered at.

There is method in the native musician's effort, however, whether he hails from Kabylie, the Soudan or the Congo.

Chiefly their instruments are of the appearance and value of penny whistles, toy drums and home-made fiddles.

It may be true that the soul of a people manifests itself in musical expression, but if so the African's soul is a very minor thing in his make-up.

The vibrating chant of the Bedouin Arab, accompanied by the music of his crude



An Arabian Musician

instruments, reminds one of Théophile Gautier's phrase: "The making of music was a troublesome, noisy amusement." Coming out from beneath one of the "Great Tents" of an encampment, or from behind a sand-dune of

the desert, it is suggestive of an exotic mystery. But when one comes actually to face "La musique Arabe," one calls it simply idiotic, and nothing else. This even though the stolid Berber affirms that it *is* an expression of his very soul. Musical intuition is one thing and musical education quite another.

The real king of an Arab orchestra is the *bendir* player. His is the most violent exercises of all the players. The *bendir* is a drum, a sort of a cross between a tambourine and a flour-sieve. There may be a whole battery of accompanying musical instruments, or there may be only a supporting pipe or flute. The pipe may be played alone, but the *bendir* never. These two instruments are the invariable accompaniment of the serpent charmer and the man who eats scorpions for the delectation of tourists, at a franc a time. He doesn't really eat them—but that is another story.

Seriously, those who have delved into the subject pretend to have discovered method in the music of the Arab; but the "Hymne Khédivial," which charms Mediterranean tourists on the terrace of Shepheard's Hotel at Cairo is nothing Arab at all. On the other hand, the "Marche Hamidiè," which one hears at Tangier, is banal enough to be pure Arab, and "La Musique Beylicale" at Tunis sounds more like the blows of a pick-axe on a water-pipe than anything else.

When it comes to the street music of the big towns, that of the dancers, and of the followers of marriage and funeral processions, there is a repetition of the same dreary wail; a mild imitation of the Scotch pibroch or the *binou* one hears in Brittany.

Arab music possesses, however, we learn, a certain formal notation which is seemingly too complicated to admit of setting forth here.



A Flute Seller

The composition of an Arab orchestra is not always the same; there are divers combinations. There is always a *bendir*, and there are *tabellas* and *chekacheks* or pipes; and again more pipes or flutes, smaller in size; and a *gambri* and perhaps a *mejoued*, the latter practically imitations of European mandolines and violas. With these crazily mixed

elements are given the concerts that one hears so often in the open air or in the Moorish cafés. The music, if music it is, rises and falls in erratic



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cadences, sometimes brutal and sometimes soft; but never melodious and always shrill and brassy.

Whether or no Arab music is great music is no part of the writer of this book to attempt to explain. The following anecdote of the late Bey of Tunis, who died in 1906, has some bearing on the question of native taste in that line.

About fifty years ago, before the legions of France invaded the country, the Mussulman sovereigns of the period regularly bought European slaves, brought to them by pirate ships cruising in the Mediterranean. One of these unfortunate captives, brought before the Bey of Tunis and

questioned as to his capabilities, admitted in a rash moment that he was the leader of an orchestra.

"Just what I want," said the Bey. "I always wished to have a band."

The prisoner began to feel uncomfortable. He saw the grave danger which menaced him. There were no instruments, and to his Majesty he explained that he must have a big drum, several little ones, large and small flutes, violins and violoncellos, trombones and cymbals.

"I have more than enough to pay for all you want," was the answer of the Bey. And he gave an order to buy the instruments.

"But the musicians?" queried the prisoner in alarm.

"Musicians! I will give you fifty negroes."

"But," asked the orchestra leader, in despair, "do the negroes know music?"

"That," answered the Bey, "is your affair, and if in a month they cannot play an air before me, you will be impaled, that's all."

The captive turned away, feeling that he had only one more month to live. But he thought he would see what the negroes could do. So he began to teach them, and for fourteen hours a day he made them practise on their instruments, giving them—as he was a Frenchman—a simple air, "*Maman, les p'tits bateaux—qui vont sur l'eau —ont-ils des jambes?*" But his efforts only plunged him in a deeper despair. One of the flute-players managed to repeat more or less accurately four or five measures, but the violinists could never get more than one note from their instruments. The trombones produced a series of most melancholy sounds. Only the big drum rose to the height of the occasion. When the fatal date arrived, the Bey summoned the leader of the orchestra before him.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"Your Majesty—" began the trembling musician.

"Then play!" was the imperative command.

The fifty negroes commenced to tune up their instruments. But no two of them ever got the same key, and the discord they made was indescribable. However, when they seemed to have reached some semblance of unison, the leader gave the signal to commence, and the dusky orchestra attacked "*Les p'tits bateaux*." The result was heartrending, and as the ear-splitting torture proceeded the leader said to himself: "In another ten minutes I shall be impaled."

The concert finally came to an end unexpectedly with a solo on the big drum. The Bey kept silence for a minute, while the leader's knees quaked against each other.

"It is not bad," said his Majesty, slowly, "but I liked the first air best."

The first air was the discordant attempt made by the negroes to tune their instruments. The leader of the orchestra began to breathe again. And from that time he gave concerts every day, and grew old and wealthy in the service of the court of the Bey of Tunis.

If one had only ears with which to hear, and no eyes with which to see, this music could readily be likened to that which accompanied the dancers of the King of Cambodia. This, at any rate, is the impression given the writer; he has heard both kinds, and there is no choice between them.

Dancing among the Arabs is a profession abandoned to the lower classes of women, and to slaves. There are two schools, as one might say: those who go around to the houses of the rich and dance for the edification of their employers and their guests, like the entertainers, the "lady-whistlers" and unsuccessful opera stars of other lands; and a less recherché class who are to all intents and purposes mere street dancers of a morality several shades removed from Esmeralda.

These latter, the "*anâlem publiques*," as they are designated in the Frenchified towns of the littoral, are known otherwise as *ghaouâzy*, and by supposedly blasé travellers as *almas*, which indeed they are not, any more than are they houris. A musician of questionable talent usually accompanies these street dancers, and picks out a monotonous minor twang to which the "dancers" jerk and twist and shrug, and then come around for a collection if they don't "dance" themselves into a state of coma—in which case they take up the collection first.

The *danseuses* of Biskra, Tunis and Constantine are daring, dusky beauties whose lives at any rate are more wholesome than those lived by the same class in the dance halls of Europe. There is a savagery about them and their dress that makes for a suggestion of another world; and if they are immoral it is because the strangers who have come among them have made them so. "It wasn't so before the white man came," is the plaint of many an exotic race. The Gringo complains of the American and his innovations, the Hindu wails loudly against the Englishman, and the Arab protests against the Latin and the Turk.

CHAPTER VIII

ARABS, TURKS, AND JEWS

THROUGHOUT North Africa, from Oran to Tunis, one encounters everywhere, in the town as in the country, the distinct traits which mark the seven races which make up the native population: the Moors, the Berbers, the Arabs, the Negroes, the Jews, the Turks and the Koulouglis. One may see all these types, living their own distinct and characteristic lives, all within a radius of a half a dozen leagues of Algiers' port and *quais*.

The Moors and the Berbers are the oldest inhabitants of the region, descended, Sallust says, “from a mingling of the soldiers of the army of Hercules, campaigning in Spain and Africa, with the Lybians and Gétules of the region.”

The *indigène* Mussulman population of Algeria and Tunisia is divided into many groups, the chief of which are the following:—

Moors, called by the Arabs the Hadars; not a race apart, but the result of a crossing to infinity of all the diverse races of North Africa.

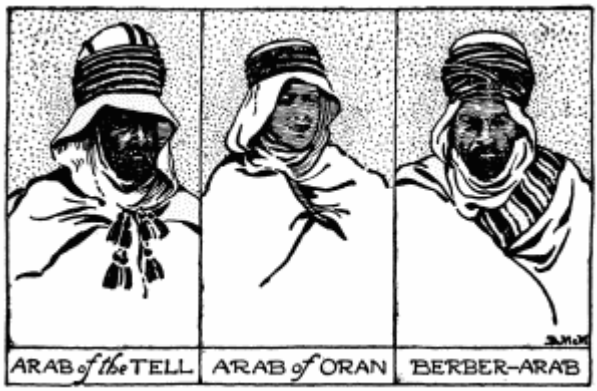
Koulouglis, descendants of Turks and Arab women.

Kabyles, the pure Berber race, speaking still their primitive language uncorrupted.

Arabs, descendants of the pure Arab of east of the Red Sea, but in reality “Berber-Arabs,” as the French know them, who still preserve in all its purity the Arab tongue, manners, and retain its ancient dress.

The Moors and the Koulouglis tend more and more to lose their individuality; the Kabyle is practically stationary; whilst the Berber-Arab is increasing in numbers at his traditional rate,—and here and there becoming so highly civilized that he wears store clothes and carries a revolver instead of a gun. He has also learned to drink absinthe and beer, in the towns, at least those of him who have become less orthodox.

There are two distinct classes of Arabs, those of the cities and those of the “Great Tents.” The former, by rubbing up with civilization, have become contaminated, whilst the real nomads of the interior still retain all their pristine force of character. The Arab hides with jealousy all particulars of his domestic life, and is a very taciturn individual, as taciturn almost as that classic type that one meets in south-eastern railway trains in England, fortified behind a copy of “The Thunderer.”



The docile, contemplative nature of the Arab permits him to pass long hours in a state of mental abstraction that would drive a man of affairs of the western world crazy. The Arab, however, is not hostile to activity, or even amusement, and will gamble for hours at some silly little game.

The Arab of the town apparently spends a good part of his time in a café. He drinks the subtle infusion, grounds and all, in innumerable potions, and plays at chess, cards or checkers.

For further amusement the Arab is quite content to gaze drowsily at the singing and dancing girls, the *er rnaïa* and *ech chtahat*, who make music, of a kind, and gyrate with considerably more fervour than grace. All the time his ear is soothed by as howling a discord as one will hear out of the practice hall of a village band in America or of "La Musique des Sapeurs-Pompiers" of the small town in France. Two guitars of sorts, and of most bizarre shape, a two-stringed fiddle (called a *rbab*) and a half a dozen Arab flutes (*jouaks*), each being played independently, cannot be expected to make harmony.

The Arab has his story-teller, too, a species of ballad

singer or reciter who, for a price, tells stories, fables, and legends.

Among this class of professional story-tellers are the *gouals*, the improvisers, and the *médahs*, who are more like revivalists than mountebanks, and about as fanatical as the shrieking sisters of a "down-south" camp-meeting.

The Arab himself regards all stolidly, smokes and drink away, and doesn't leave the café sometimes for days. It's an orgie, if you like, but less reprehensible than the bridge-playing, drinking bouts of civilization, which last too often from Saturday until Monday morning.

The Arab of the desert, or the Bedouin, shows to advantage when compared with the town-dwelling Arab of the coast settlements, and whether he be Sheik of a tribe or Cadi of a community, is a hospitable, kindly person with even—at times—a sense of humour, and a guile which is rare in these days of artfulness. The town Arab, the "dweller within the walls," is not primarily wicked or unreliable, but he has mixed with the sordid ways of commercialism, and his favours—extended always with a smile—are apt to bear a distinct relation to what he hopes to get out of you. If he is simply an ordinary individual, or a gamin who points out your road, his *quid pro quo* is not likely to be more than a cigarette, but the merchant of a bazaar who offers you coffee—and makes you take it, too —charges for it in the bill, if even your purchase of a "*fatmah*" charm, or a pair of "*babouches*" amounts to no more than two francs in value,—bargained down, of course, from his original demand of a hundred sous.

Like the Chinaman, the Arab can smile blandly when he wants to put you off the track. A smile that begins at the corners of the mouth and extends so that it makes a wrinkle at the nape of the neck is disconcerting to all but the smiler. That's the Arab kind of a smile.

With all his faults and virtues the Arab of to-day is not a

great offender; he is only an obstructionist. Indolent, insouciant and apathetic, the Arab lives to-day as in the past, indifferent to all progress. If you show him your typewriter, your fountain-pen or your kodak, he shrugs his shoulders and says simply, "*Maboule! Maboule! You are fools! You are fools! Why try to kill time!*"

At Msaken, a frontier post in Tunisia, which was established only fifteen or a score of years ago, and has already attained a population of ten thousand souls, a protest was actually presented to the government by the Arab population, asking that the great trading-route into the desert be not laid down through their city, but that they, the *indigènes*, be left to peace and tranquillity.

To sum the Arab up in a few words is difficult. He is a frequenter of that path which lies between the straight way of virtue and the quagmire of deceit. He is not alone in his profession, but it is well to define his position exactly. Like the Indian and the Chinaman, the Arab is deceitful, but scrupulously honest as far as appropriating anything that may rightly belong to you is concerned, when it comes to actual business transactions. A bargain once made with an Arab is inviolate. "*Ils ne sont pas mauvais ces gens, mais ils sont voleurs quand même*," says every Frenchman of the Arab, unjustly in many cases, no doubt, but true enough in the general run. You must make your bargain first.

The real Arab—meaning literally a tent-dweller, for, in a certain sense, the town-dweller is no Arab—loves first and above all his horse. Next he loves his firearm, which poetically ought to be a six-foot, gold-inlaid, muzzle-loading matchlock, which would kick any man but an Arab flat on his back at every shot; actually in Algeria or Tunis the Arab is the possessor of a modern breech-loader. Next to his gun he loves his eldest son. Last comes his wife—or wives. Daughters don't even count; he doesn't even know how many he has. Until some neighbour comes along and

proposes to marry one of them, a daughter is only a chattel, a soulless thing, though often a pretty, amiable, helpful being. The Arab of the settlements may be a lover of horse-flesh, too, but he only professes it; any old hack is good enough for him to ride. He will descant to you all the livelong day on the beauties and qualities of some rare specimen of the equine race which he has at the home of his father, back in the "Great Tents;" but meanwhile he drives, or rides, a sorry spavined nag fit only for the bone-yard.

North Africa is not only the Land of Sunshine; it is also the land of the burnous. This soft, floating drapery which clothes the Arab so majestically, whatever may be his social rank,—miserable *meskine* or opulent Caïd,—is a thing fearfully and wonderfully made.

There are burnouses and burnouses, as there are cheeses and cheeses. This ideal garment of the Mussulman Arab differs at times in form and colour and quality, but it is always a simple burnous. The Sheik of a tribe or the Caïd of a village wraps himself in a rich red robe, and the poor vagabond Arab of the hills and desert makes the best showing he can with his sordid pieced-up rag of a mantle.

The classic burnous is woven of a creamy white lamb's wool, or that of a baby camel, though often its immaculateness is of but a brief duration. The Caïd and the Sheik rise above this, and the nomad often descends to a gunny-sack, from which exhales an odour *sui generis*; but one and all carry it off with grace and éclat, as does the Arlésienne the fichu, and the Madrillienne the mantilla. It is the garment that is worn by the Arab of the towns, by the lone sheep-herder of the plains, and by the nomad of the desert.

An Arab shepherd is a happy mortal if he can gain twenty francs a month, a little *pap* for breakfast, a dish of couscous for dinner, and a new burnous once a year. He will spend all his income (for he, apparently, as all his

tribe, has acquired a taste for strong drink, though even he will not partake of it when it is red) on absinthe, of a kind, and tobacco, of a considerably better kind, every time he comes to town. How he clothes himself had best not be inquired into too closely, for excepting the burnous, he is mostly clothed in rags. The burnous is as effectual a covering as charity.

The Arab officials, the Sheik of a tribe, the Caïd, and the Cadi even, are all "decorated" as a sort of supernumerary reward for their services on behalf of the established government.

One day *en voyage*—in a *compartiment* of that slow-going express train which runs daily from Algiers to El Guerrah, and takes fourteen hours to do what it ought to, and will accomplish, in six, when they get some American locomotives to take the place of the old crocks now in service,—we met a young Caïd of a tribe of the Tell who had been summoned to Algiers to get the collaret of the Legion bestowed upon his manly breast. He was decorated already, for he was the son of the "Great Tents" and a powerful man in his community, but he was ready enough to make a place for another *étoile*. He said in his queer jargon French: "*Li gouvernement y vian di me donni l'Itoile di Ligien. Ji suis content d'avoir.*" We sympathized with him, were glad for him, and we parted, each on our respective ways, and by this time he is home waiting and hoping for the next. What won't a man do for a *bout de ruban* or a silver star?

The Arab's French is much like our own—queer at times, but it is expressive. The following beauties of judicial eloquence, from the bench of an Arab justice of the peace will explain the situation better than any further comment. With the Arab the Irish "*bull*" becomes a French "*goat*."

"*On peut entrer dans un cabaret sans être l'amant de quelqu'n.*"

This is good enough French, though the sentiment is of doubtful morality.

"*Le plaignant a lancé, alors, un coup de sifflet de désespoir.*"

A "*sifflet de désespoir*" is presumably something akin to a wail.

"*Le plaignant s'est adressé à la police parce qu'il désirait rentrer dans ses bouteilles.*"

"*Dans ses bouteilles*," may be Arab-French for "in his cups"—or it may not.

"*Il portera de deuil aussi longtemps que sa femme sera morte.*"

She will be dead a long time, no doubt, once having taken the fatal step.

"*Je dirai encore deux mots, mais je serai très brief.*"

Two words! That is very brief.

"*Il n'a laissé que des descendants en ligne collatérale.*"

What is a collateral descendant?

The Arabs' struggles with French should give the rest of the world, who are not French, courage. They seem to care little for tenses or numbers, but they make their way nevertheless. A Zou Zou, in calling your attention to something, says simply, "*Regarde*," but you understand, and so does he when you say "*Regardez*," so what matter!

The Arab nourishes himself well, as well as circumstances will allow, though it must be remembered that the tenets of his religion call for abstemiousness. He differs from the Greek of old in that he believes in a good dinner and a light supper. "*Eh bien!*" said the traveller Montmaur, "*I will dine with the Arab and sup with the Greeks*."

The Arab is a connoisseur in tea and coffee, and an adept at cigarette smoking.

Couscous is the *plat du jour* with the Arab. It is his

national dish. Mutton or lamb (*kebeh* or *kherouf*) is almost the only meat, and most frequently the Arab roasts the carcass whole, spitted on a branch. He roasts it before, or over, an open fire, and accordingly it is all the better for that. In America we bake our meats, which is barbaric; and in England they boil them, which is worse. The Arab knows better.

The Arab eats his meat *à la main,* gnaws it with his teeth, and pulls it apart with his fingers; the delicate morsel, the titbit, is the kidney, and he is a lucky Arab who grabs it first, though if you are a guest in his tent he reserves it for you. Beef is seldom, if ever, eaten, but camel is in high esteem, the hump (*hadba*) being the best "*cut*." Pork (*el hallouf*) is abhorred by the true Mussulman. He has reason! Dried meat or smoked meat, like the jerked beef of the Far West, is often carried on long desert journeys, when fresh meat is as scarce a commodity as it was on an Indiaman a hundred days out from Bombay a century ago.

The Arab eats soup, when he takes the trouble to make it, and he knows well its concocting. For pastry, too, the Arab has a sweet tooth, and it also frequently comes into the menu, with honey and dates predominating in its make-up.

The Arab smokes *kif* also, a concoction whose iniquitous effects are only equalled by those of the state-protected opium of Bengal.

These voluptuous epicurean Arabs smoke *kif,* not surreptitiously, but guiltily. Carefully they wipe their pipes and cook the little ball of drug, and offer it to you first with all the grace and seductiveness of a houri. You don't accept, and they smoke it themselves, and in a short space drop off into a semi-intoxicated condition, forgetful of the world in the stupefying smoke which haloes about their heads. Like opium with the Chinaman, *kif* is the curse of the Arab.

After the Arabs and the Berbers, the Jews are the most striking race one meets on the African coast, or even in the interior, where they herd to themselves in some dingy quarter of an Arab village and ply their trades of jewellers, leather workers, embroiderers and, of course, as money changers. They talk Hebrew among themselves and Arabic with natives, and they are as clannish as Scotchmen.

The Berber and the Jew and the Arab are necessary to each other, whether they are town dwellers, village inhabitants or nomads. They make business, each of them, and they don't live by taking in each other's washing—as does the indigenous population of the Scilly Islands, or by exploiting tourists—as do the Swiss. Altogether the social system as worked out by the mixed races of North Africa seems to be a success.

One curses the Jews in Algeria and Tunisia, but then one curses them everywhere for the same attributes. The Hebrew of Algeria is in no way different from those of his brethren in other Mediterranean countries, and here he has a craftsman's mission to fill and he fills it very well. Catch a Jew and make him into a tailor, a jeweller or a banker, and he is more adept at these professions than men of any other race on earth.

Are the Jews and Mussulmans men like other sons of Adam? This is a question which has been asked and reasked since the earliest times





Jewish Women of Tunis

of history, and no one yet seems to have decided the question. When the Papal See was transferred to Avignon in the Comtat Venaissin (it was for seventy years rooted in France), the position of the Jews seems to have been defined, and they were put on a par with orthodox religionists. But before and since, their status has been less readily defined. Froissart put it in non-contradictory words when he said that except in the lands of the church (in the

Comtat), these aliens were everywhere chased and persecuted.

This reference to the church and the Jews recalls the fact that many Arab slaves of Barbary were owned by the Papal powers in the days when the traffic was a profitable one for Turkish *pachas*.

The slaves of Barbary were known all through the Mediterranean. Civita Vecchia in the eighteenth century, directly under Papal patronage, held a number of them of which the following is a description from an old record:—

Arab Names	Names in the Galleys	Nationality	Age	Health
Papass	Papass	Tunis	45	Good
Acmet	Buffalotto	Tripoli	40	"
Mamchet	Marzocco	Alger	45	"
Mesaud	Piantaceci	"	35	"
Machmet	Mezza Luna	"	30	"
Aamor	Bella Camiscia	Alger	30	Good
Machmet	Il Gabbiano	"	30	"
Ali	Nettuno	Tunis	40	Mediocre
Aamor	Carbone	Tripoli	30	Good

These men in fact were for service in the Pontifical galley.

They were a fine race of servants, evidently!

The Jews are much less numerous in Algeria than in Morocco and Tunisia, but they take on a very considerable commercial importance in the picturesque conglomerate ensemble of peoples in the cities like Algiers, Oran or Tunis; they gather the small savings of the nomad races in a way that is the marvel of all who know their trade. Furthermore, as French citizens, they play no small part in political affairs. What they lack in numbers they make up in power, and the money-lending trade, while seemingly in

disrepute, is quite a necessary one in commercial communities.

The Jews lend money to Christians the world over, men and nations alike, and in Africa they do the same to the improvident Arab. Clearly the Jew has a mission in life; he has found it out, and he sticks to it, and has ever since that historic hour in the Temple.

Of all the mixed races with which one rubs shoulders in Northern Africa, it is the Arab who interests us most. It is his country that we are in. It is the Arab who must be our guide, philosopher and friend. "Ask an Arab anything you like," say the French, "but ask nothing of a Maltese or an Italian." Why, they do not tell you, but simply shrug their shoulders in the expressive Frenchman's way.

CHAPTER IX

SOME THINGS THAT MATTER—TO THE ARAB

THERE are three kinds of *noblesse* among the Arabs: there is the aristocrat class, the *noblesse de race*, descended, so they think, from Fatma, the daughter of the Prophet; the *noblesse militaire*, descendants of the Arab conquerors, of which Mohammed and his family are also descended; and finally the *noblesse réligieuse*, a hereditary *noblesse* like the preceding, but a distinction that can only be acquired by meritorious performance of a religious duty.

The tribes each have a head known as a *Caïd*, and each tribe is divided into smaller tribes and factions who obey implicitly the sub-head or *Cheikh* (sheik). The head of a *douar*,—a group of tents,—if the collection is not great enough to have a presiding Sheik, is a sort of committee, like the bodies of selectmen of a New England village.

Over and above all *indigène* control, the French

administration is the real head of the Arabs in Algeria, and the Tunisian French *fonctionnaires* hold the same powers in Tunisia.

The Arab or Kabyle chiefs in Algeria are merely the agents for the execution of the government's laws, civil or military, and in Tunisia the laws for each province (*outhan*) are made known to the *Caïd* by the authorities, and it is he who is held responsible for their observance. As for punishment for a crime committed,—for they are not all plaster saints,—the Arabs would much prefer the old Turkish *bastinado* to a sentence behind prison walls or a fine in money, sheep or goats. Does civilization civilize?

The Arabs are full of wise saws mostly adopted from the Koran, or from the Apocryphal books of the Prophet. They have a saying which might well be put into a motto suitable for the creed of any man:—

"*El-Khams*, *El-Miter*, *El-Ansab* and *El-Aglane* are the inventions of the devil."

El-Khams is worry; *El-Miter* is gambling; *El-Ansab* are the stones or thorns in one's road; and *El-Aglane* is the argument by sword instead of by reason. The following might well be printed in Gothic script and hung in our own "dens" and boudoirs along with Stevenson's "Prayer."

"*When a woman says to her husband, I have never received a single benefit from you, all the good acts she may have done lose their value.*"

"*God detests those who show pride before their companions.*"

"*Go a mile to visit a sick man, two miles to reconcile a pair of quarrellers and three miles to see a holy man.*"

"*When you think of the faults of your neighbours, think also of your own.*"

"*He who salutes thee first is free from pride.*"

"*God hates dirtiness and disorder.*"

With respect to this last, the Arab performs his ablutions with great regularity and devotion, but by contrast, curiously enough, enshrouds himself frequently in dirty, verminous rags.

The most detested sequence of events that can happen to an Arab are ranked as follows:—

I. The drunkenness which makes a fool of a man.

II. The sleep which dissipates the drunkenness.

III. And the chagrin which destroys the sleep.

The emotion has been felt by others, who cannot slip on and off the *peau de chagrin* as did Balzac's hero.

The Arabs explain their abstention from wine by an act of the Prophet forbidding its use.

One day the Prophet saw, in passing, a group of young men who were making free and drinking of wine. He blessed them, saying, "Drink at your ease, you have the benediction of God." At the end of a brief interval the Prophet, passing that way again, saw them disputing among themselves, and learned that one had been killed. Thereupon he vowed upon their heads that "wine was a curse upon them, and that not one who was given to it should hope to enter Heaven."

Among the Arab *indigènes* to-day, one remarks an almost total abstention from the "wine when it is red." Contrariwise they may frequently be seen drinking white wine, and indeed they have a great fondness for champagne,—but they are not particular about the brand, the label on the bottle means nothing to them, so long as it is a gaudy one, and so, like many Americans, they drink something which they think is champagne, and is just as "heady."

Arab hospitality is famous, their very manner of life, even to-day, as in olden times, makes it a sort of compulsory tenet of their creed.

"Ida andek ktir, ati men mulek.
Ida andek glil, ati men galbeck."

"If you have much, give of your best.
`If you have little, give from the heart."

Never ask an Arab his age; you will be disappointed if you do. The Arabs have no civil register and generally ignore their exact age, frequently reckoning only by some great event which may have happened within their memories, like the "Uncle Toms" and "Old Mammies" of "way down Souf." With such a rule-of-thumb reckoning, you are likely to remain as much in the dark as before.

It is a belief among the Arabs that they can carry on a conversation with animals. Not all amongst them are thus accomplished, but the speech of animals, they say, can be learned, and many of their head men know it. They share this belief with other Orientals; but there is no proof that they have learned their lessons as well as did Garner in his attempts to acquire "monkey talk." The Arabs, too, are superstitious. They believe in the evil eye, and they object most decidedly and vociferously if you point your finger at them; also, they wear charms and amulets against disease and disaster.

They used to object to the camera man and the artist, but to-day, since they have come to learn that you carry away with you no actual part of themselves, only an impression, their attitude has changed.

The Arab warrior must have ten qualities, or he is *déclassé* in the favour of all other Arabs.

I. The courage of a cock.

II. The painstaking of a chicken.

III. The heart of a lion.

IV. The brusqueness of a wild boar.

V. The tricks of a fox.

VI. The prudence of a hedgehog.

VII. The swiftness of a wolf.

VIII. The resignation of a dog.

IX. The hand always open.

X. The sword always drawn, and one sole speech for friend or foe.

The Arab warrior, save as he now serves France, has disappeared, but his precepts were good ones for a soldier.

The Arabs' regard for womankind has often been misunderstood and misstated. Not all Mussulmans have the same noble regard for womankind. The Turk and the Persian is notably a tyrant in his home; and, among the Arabs, the Bedouin is frequently a brute towards his wives and daughters; but the conventional *Arab-Berberisé* is quite compassionate and liberal in his views and treatment of the female members of his family.

"*Auprès de Dieu, le maître du monde, une fille vaut un garçon.*"

Thus say the Arabs, but in practice it's all the other way. The boy stays with the family and adds his strength and talents to his father's tribe; but the daughter, arriving at the marrying age, which comes early with the Arabs, leaves not only her family, but the ancestral *douar* or community, perhaps even the tribe, and goes where her new master pleases.

In a word, the boy is another sword or brain for his family's interests, whilst the daughter goes to augment those who may, perhaps, at some future time, be enemies of her parents.

From this one judges that with the Arabs, as with many other exotic nations, the birth of a son brings real joy to the parental roof-tree; but that of a girl merely a lukewarm expression of gratification, or perhaps nothing





more than a disappointed resignation. If it is a boy that is new-born, the parents are congratulated with: “God has made you a good gift!” If it is a girl: “May you be as happy as possible!” is considered as all that is needful, a sort of commiserating congratulation this, and the father perforce responds ordinarily: “*Zaddat di nââla!*” (“It is my sorrow.”)

Once the child is born, the sex determined, the “rejoicings,” properly called, do not differ in one case from the other, for the Arab believes profoundly in

Mohammed's diction—"These are the innocents and the *Fête des Anges* must be the same in each case."

Seven days after the birth, the baby daughter's *Fête de Naîssance* takes place in presence of the Caïd, the marabout, parents and friends. The women cry and sob joyfully, and dance with the abandon of a dervish, and the screech and roll of the *guellal* and the flute make things hideous for one who has no special responsibility bound up in the event. The men, too, give themselves over to the dance quite as vigorously and quite as gracefully as do the women, and a feast—all birth and wedding celebrations end with a feast—terminates the great event so far as a general participation goes. The eternal *couscous* is the *pièce de résistance*, with dates, raisins, figs, honey, butter and milk in addition.

For a choice of names for their little daughter, the Arab parents, almost without exception, choose one of the following:—

Aicha (the life)	Kadra (the blossom)
Aatika	Kneltoum
Badia	Meryem (Marie)
Djohar (the pearl)	Nedjma (the star)
Fathma	Sofia (the pure)
Fatima (diminutive)	Yamina (the prosperous)
Halima (the gentle)	Yetan
Kheddouma	Zina (the belle)
Khedidja	Zinent
Kreira (the best)	Zohra (the flower)
Kheroufa	

Sometimes the child is given the name of some female friend of the family, who agrees to act as godmother through the early years of its life, and is obliged to spend a relatively large sum of money in supplying a baptismal present, as do godmothers the world over. The boy under the same circumstances would probably have been named

Mohammed or Achmed and have done with it.

After the actual naming ceremony the great bracelet talismans are put on the girl-child's arms, and a little later a similar decoration will be given her for her neck. If the parents are rich their children are often rudely sent away to be nourished and given strength beneath the shade of some Saharan oasis, not too far away but that they can be visited once a year. The nurse who guards the children in their desert home is called the second mother, but she is a nurse pure and simple and bears no relation to the godmother.

The child is carried pick-a-back by day, by one or another of its mothers, clumsily swathed in a none too clean-looking woollen cloth during the first few months, and at night is securely stowed away in a fig-leaf basket which is hung from the tent poles, a cradle which is soft, flexible and cheap.

In time light foods, such as the milk of goats, cows, or camels is given the child, and as early as possible it is told or shown how to take a bath—and made to take it whenever the idea enters the parents' heads.

For dress, the girl is clothed as becomes the station and wealth of her parents; her ears are pierced in two or three places, but as no jewelry is worn by infants the holes are kept open by silk cords.

The home life of these early years is very much *en famille* among the Arabs of the countryside, with horses, oxen, and cows as dwellers under the same roof.

As soon as possible the child is taught to pray according to the religion of its parents. Each prayer is preceded by an ablution. Truly the Mohammedan religion is a cleanly and purifying one!

The practical education of an Arab girl commences when she is shown how to cut and fit a burnous (nothing of the tailor-made or Paris mode about this to make it difficult; any one who can handle a pair of scissors can do

the thing), to sew a tent-covering together, and the thousand and one domestic accomplishments of women everywhere, not forgetting spinning and weaving.

In the poorer families, those who live in mean, ragged tents, not the "Great Tents," the child is most likely first set to doing the cooking. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, she begins to "take notice" of the youth of the other sex, meanwhile partaking of the fare of the family board only when there are no strangers present. During visits to friends and neighbours, or to the marabouts, or at fêtes given in her honour, the young Arab girl of whatever social rank is closely chaperoned, always accompanied by her mother. The



The Life of the "Great Tents"

daughters of the "Great Tents" are veiled from their tenth

year onwards, only the poor remain with their visage uncovered. Music is a part of the early education of the Arab girl. She learns to dance, *yatagan* in hand; and to play the *bendir*, a sort of Spanish *tambourin*, and the *touiba*, a similar instrument, somewhat smaller and less sonorous.

At an early age, too, she learns the rudiments of the arts of coquetry. She puts rouge (*zerkoun*) on her face, and blacks her eyelids with *koheul*; and, finally, colours the tips of her toes and fingers a coppery red with henna. She has her wrists and ankles tattooed in bands or bracelets; and paints beauty spots, a star or a crude imitation of a fly, on her cheeks or forehead. By this time she is thought to be a ravishing beauty.

Even the poorest of Arab families guard their daughter's honour with the greatest circumspection, never a doubtful word or phrase is uttered in her presence. She is brought up in the greatest purity of atmosphere. Should there be any doubts as to this, her spouse, even on the marriage day, will send her back to her parents dressed in a white burnous—with no thanks. Dishonour can be punished by death. The Cadi is the referee in all matters of dispute or doubt of this nature, and his word is final.

Among the wealthiest tribes the daughters are often promised in marriage at the age of four or five, and frequently they marry between ten and fifteen. Indeed they must marry at an early age or people say unkind things about them. In the Sahara the rich marry three or four wives, the poor one, rarely two. One may not marry but one wife in any one year.

The Arab proverbs concerning women are many and mostly complimentary.

"*The quarrelsome wife is for her spouse a heavy burden, but a happy wife is as a crown of gold.*"

The Arab poet says of his chosen type of female beauty:

—

Hair black as the feathers of the ostrich.
Forehead wide and eyebrows thick and arched.
Eyes black like a gazelle's.
Nose straight and finely modelled.
Cheeks like bouquets of roses.
Mouth small and round.
Teeth like pearls set in coral.
Lips small and coloured like vermilion.
Neck white and long.
Shoulders broad.
Hands and feet small.
Manners agreeable.
Laughter delicate.

"She must laugh soberly, must not gad about nor dispute with her husband or neighbours, have a well-governed tongue, may rouge slightly, guard well the house, and ever give good counsel."

The formula might well be any man's ideal; though the Arabs say when you meet this paragon of a woman, you become crazy, and if she leaves you, you will die. All of which may be true also! The ideal is one made up of an appalling array of virtues.

An Arab tale tells of a warrior horseman, El Faad-ben-Mohammed, rich in this world's goods and lands, who met a certain Oumya-bent-Abdallah, and would marry her, so beautiful was she. He sent his emissary to her to plead his cause, for he was timid in love, if brave in war.

The young girl asked what might be her wooer's position in life, whereupon his friend replied: "He is a warrior; when the fight is at its thickest, it is he who cleaves a passage through the ranks of the foe. He is taciturn and sober and knows well how to take adversity." This seems a good enough send-off for a proxy to give, but the maid would have none of it. She said simply: "Go back to your friend. It is a lion that you tell me of. He wants a

lioness, not a woman. I would not suit."

The suitor for a young girl's hand among the Arabs often does make his demand of her parents by proxy; and much bargaining and giving and taking of concessions goes on, all without embarrassment to the swain. It's not a bad plan! A contract follows, and finally legal sanction. Every Mussulman marriage must have the consideration of the *dot* as a part of the legal agreement. The *dot* may vary with the fortunes of the girl's family, or with the condition of the suitor; and, in case of divorce, this *dot* must be returned to the unfortunate lady's parents, not to her, whatever may be the cause.

The wedding trousseau of the young wife, that which she brings in the way of clothes and jewelry, must comport with her former station in life; but her *dot*, which may be in kind, not necessarily in money, may be as great as the prospective husband can worm out of the girl's parents. A rich Arab of the "Great Tents" whom we heard of at Jouggourt gave up the following: Three camels, fifty sheep, eighteen skins, three bolts of cotton cloth (made in Manchester—the "Manchester goods" of commerce as it is known in the near and far East); a gun (a Remington so-called, most likely made in Belgium), with brass and silver inlaid in the stock; two pairs of silver rings for ankles and wrists; two buckles for the *haïk*, a silken burnous, a silk sash, a string of coral beads (made of celluloid at Birmingham), earrings, a mirror (of course) and a red *haïk*, and a *melhafa* or *haïk* of cotton.

Among the desert tribes the women of all classes of society frequently have their faces unveiled; but, as they approach the great trade-routes and the cities, they closely enwrap the face so that only a pair of glittering black eyes peep out. Without regard to class distinctions or age all Arab women are passionately fond of jewelry of all kinds, finger-rings, anklets, bracelets, chains, and brooches.

Repudiation, or divorce, is legal among the Arabs if

accomplished in a legal way, and is simply and expeditiously brought about. The following is an account reported recently in an Algerian journal:—

El Batah had presented himself before the Cadi for the purpose of "repudiating" his wife, "*une femme grande et forte, d'une éclatante beauté*." "Well, what is it?" said the Cadi, scenting in the affair a big fee, at least big for him. The Cadi was very much smitten by the lady, it appears, though he did not know it, or at any rate admit it, at the time.

"I come to complain of my wife, who has beaten me and nearly broken in my head," said the poor man.

"It is true," echoed the woman, "but I did not mean to do it, I am sorry; I ought not to be punished." (This doesn't seem logical, does it?)

"Well, I shall '*repudiate*' her" said the man; "I will have none of her."

"Return her *dot*, then, to her family," said the Cadi.

"Great Allah! It is impossible, it is four thousand *dirhems*, how can I pay it?"

By this time the Cadi saw his fat fee vanishing, and his ardour for the lady of the *striking* beauty rising. He had just lost his fourth wife, the Cadi, and there was a place in the ranks for another.

"If I will give you the sum," said he, "will you '*repudiate*' this woman?"

"Yes, willingly," said the fellow.

"Well, here's your money," said the accommodating official.

No consideration of the women of North Africa ought to terminate without a reference to the Mauresque, that gracious type found all through Northwestern Africa, a product of the mixture of the races, an outcome of civilization and the growth of the great cities of the

seaboard. They are usually named Fathma, Zohra, Aicha, Houria, Mami, Mimi, Roza, Ourida, Kheira, etc.; and they leave the bed and board of their parents usually between the ages of twelve and fourteen to be married, or for other reasons. Practically all the world looks upon the Mauresques as social outcasts. The class had become so numerous about the middle of the nineteenth century that the hand of philanthropy was held out to them to enable them to better their condition in life. They were given a rudimentary book education, and were taught the art of Oriental embroidery with all its extravagance of capricious arabesques and threads of gold.

As for the other class of Mauresques, the *rikats*, those who have become contaminated,—for not all are saved, nor ever will be,—one recognizes them plainly as of the world worldly whenever they take their walks abroad. The sad amusement of visiting mosques and cemeteries is not *their* sole pleasure, as it is that of the legitimate Arab wife, or Mauresque, even though her spouse be wealthy.

The Mauresque *partner de convenance* of a wealthy *indigène* or European may have her own horses and carriages, perhaps by this time even her own automobile; and rolls off the kilometres in her daily promenades on the fine suburban roads of Algiers, in company with the *haute société* of the city, and the thronging American, English and German tourists from Mustapha. She even dines at the *cabarets* of Saint Eugène, Pointe Pescade or the Jardin d'Essai, and no one does more than look askance at her. Algiers is very *mondaine*, and its morals as varied as its population.

Even though the *rikat* dresses after the European mode, there is no mistaking her origin. Her great, snappy black eyes, livened and set off by dashes of *koheul*, are fine to look upon; and her figure, as she sits in her cabriolet or opera-box, is so well hidden that one does not realize its cumbersomeness. At home she wears the seraglio

"pantalon" of the Arabian Nights, ankles bare and feet stuffed into *babouches*—which an Indian or a plainsman would call moccasins. Over all is the *r'lila*, a sort of cloak of gold-embroidered, silken stuff, very light and wavy. It's not so graceful as the *kimona* of the Japanese, but it's far more picturesque and useful than the most ravishing tea-gown ever donned in Fifth Avenue or Mayfair.

The Mussulman calendar is simple, and, except in the nomenclature of its divisions, is not greatly different from our own. The Arab year has twelve lunar months, making in all three hundred and fifty-four or three hundred and fifty-five days.

Moharem	30	days
Safer	29	"
Rbia el ouel	30	"
Rbia el tani	29	"
Djoumad el ouela	30	"
Djoumad et tania	29	"
Rdjab	30	"
Châban	29	"
Ramdan	30	"
Choual	29	"
Dzou el Kada	30	"
Dzou el Hadja	29	or 30
	354	or 355

Seasons

Spring	El rbia
Summer	Es Saïf
Autumn	El Kherif
Winter	Ech Chta

The principal fêtes of the Arab are those of the

Mussulman religion, the same one observes in Bombay, Constantinople and Cairo.

Ras el âm	1 Moharem (first day of year)
El âchoura	10 Moharem (anniversary of the death of the son of Sidi Ali bou Thâleb)
El Mouloud	12 Rbia el ouel (anniversary of the birth of the Prophet)
Çiam	1 Ramdan
Aïd es srir (or little Beïram)	1 Choual
Aïd el kbir (or great Beïram)	10 Dzou el haja (in commemoration of sacrifice of Abraham)

The following glossary of commonly met with Arab words is curious and useful:—

Allah	Dieu—God
Bab	Porte or passage, gateway (as Bab Souika at Tunis)
Burnous	A woollen cloak
Cadi	A judge or notary
Caïd	Sheik, chief
Calif or Khalif	Chief, commander
Cheikh	(Sheik) Chief of a community or douar
Coran	(Koran) The Book of Islam
Couscous or Couscoussu	(Kouskouss)
Derviche	(Dervish) A member of a certain sect of religious dancers
Divan	The council-chamber of a Sultan or Bey
Djebel	Mountain

Djinn	Evil spirits, demon
Dof	A square drum
Douar	Group of tents, a community
Effendi	Title of quality
Fakir	A mendicant monk
Fellah	Egyptian peasant
Ganoun (or Kanoun)	Harp of 75 strings (seen at Alexandria and Tunis)
Goule	Vampire
Goum	Native soldiery from the South
Gourbi	Hut or cabin
Hadji	Pilgrim who has been to Mecca
Hammam	Moorish or Turkish baths
Harem	The place reserved for Mussulman women
Henne	Henna for staining hair or body
Houri	Celestial Virgin of Paradise
Imam	The prayer leader
Islam	The religion of the Prophet
Kabyles	Berber mountaineers between Algiers and Tunis
Khalifa	Chief of a religious community
Kheloua	Cave, grotto
Kouba	Chapel above the tomb of a saint
Lella	Madame
Marabout	A holy person or his tomb (mark the distinction; one word for two entities)
Mehari	A “high speed” dromedary
Moghreb	Occident
Moghrabin	Man of the Occident
Mosque	Mussulman place of worship (in French Mosquée)

Narghileh	Arab or Turkish pipe
Ouali	Marabout
Oukil	Guardian
Raïa	Flag
Raïs	Captain
Roumi	Christians
Scheriff (or Cheriff)	Descendants of the Prophet
Sidi	Monsieur, sir
Simoun (Sirocco)	The South wind of the Sahara
Spahi	Native warrior horseman
Sultan	Virtually King or Emperor
Sultani	Gold money
Tarr or Tar	Tabor drum
Teboul	Tambourine
Zaouia	Hermitage, chapel, school
Zerma	Clarionet

CHAPTER X

"THE ARAB SHOD WITH FIRE"

(*Horses, Donkeys, and Mules*)

As a Kentucky colonel once said, the pure-bred Arabian horse is a fine thing in his native land; but there is more good horse-flesh, per head of population, in the United States than the first home of the ancestor of the blooded horse ever possessed. Everything points to the fact that the gentleman knew what he was talking about, as fine specimens of Arabian horse-flesh are rare to-day, even in

Arabia and North Africa. They exist, of course, but the majority of horses one sees in Algeria and Tunisia are sorry-looking hacks.

In the desert the case is somewhat different. There the beautiful Arabian horses of which romance and history tell are more numerous than the diminutive bronchos of the coast plains and mountains. The descendants of the Anazeh mares, the parent branch of royal Arabian blood, are not many; but an Arab of good lineage may still be had by one who knows how to pick him out, or gets some friendly Sheik to give him his.

No one seems to know where the original Arabian horse was bred, though it was known in the Mauritania of the Romans, in the environs of Carthage, long before that little affair of Romulus and Remus startled an astonished world. In all probability he was a descendant of the same horses which made up the Numidian cavalry which overran Rome during the Punic wars, and that's a pretty ancient pedigree.

To-day all through North Africa, in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Tripoli, Egypt, and in Arabia across the Red Sea, the type is recognizable in all variations of purity and debasement.

The "Arab shod with fire" of the Bedouin love-song may not be all that sentiment has pictured, but he is an exceedingly high-bred animal nevertheless.

Here are his fine points:—

Four "Wide"—Points	The forehead
	The portrail (chest)
	Loins
	Membres (shoulders)
Four "Long"—	Encolure (neck)
	Rayons supérieurs (upper fore and hind leg)

	Body
	Hind quarter
Four "Short"—Points	Reins (flank)
	Paturons (pasterns)
	Ears
	Tail
Coat brilliant and dark coloured	

This is the formulæ upon which the French remount officers choose their Arabian horses, and for hard work they take always a "*traineur avec sa queue*," a horse of seven years or more.

Each chief of an Arab family possesses one or more of the blooded Arabians of classic renown. It is his friend in joy and sorrow, and his constant companion when he is away from his family. If the Arab chief has many horses he always keeps one, the favourite, as a war-charger. If there are no wars or rumours of war in sight, he only rides this favourite on gala or parade occasions; but at all times he gives it more care and attention than many heads of families, in more conventionally civilized lands, give their wives. The Arab knows the ancestors of his horse as well as he knows his own; and he has its pedigree writ on parchment, which is more trouble than he has taken to perpetuate the memory of his own remote parents. The Algerian Arab horse has been called a "mixed-*pur sang*," whatever that may mean, but certainly it will take somebody more expert than a mere "horsey" person (the kind that go around talking about their "mounts" and how "fit and saucy" was the one they rode that morning) to mark the distinction between the best of the Algerian variety and those of Egypt, Syria or Arabia.

The Arab trains his horses for his own personal use, to pace, canter, or gallop, never to trot, a gait which is only fit for the European who is afraid to sit on, or behind, a horse with a quick-moving pace. This is the Arab version of it, and an Arab horse owner will hobble his beast with a rope if he shows the least inclination to trot or single foot. If this won't break him, why he sells him to some one who will stand for it—at the best price he can get. The Arab horse owner thinks with the late A. T. Stewart: "If you have got a loss to meet, meet it at once and get your capital working on something else."

The writer recently met an Italian trying to bargain with an Arab for a saddle-horse. The Arab was with difficulty convinced that the gentleman was not an Englishman who would buy only a "trotting saddle-horse." *Quel horreur!* "Allah be praised!" said Ali-something-or-other, the trader, all Europeans



An Arab and His Horse in Gala Attire

are not imitators of the English taste in saddle-horses. Once in awhile an Italian or a Spaniard or a Frenchman wants a horse for a *carrousel* and not for an amble in the Bois, which is his idea of doing as they do in London.

The reputation of the blooded Arabian horse, whether it is found in Arabia, Algeria or Morocco, is classic, and the mule, too, seems here to take on qualities not its birthright elsewhere. With the donkey, the *petit âne* with a cross

down its back and a silver *museau*, the same thing holds good. North Africa is the donkey's paradise. Here, if he finds herbage scant once and again, he thrives as nowhere else, and attains often an age of thirty-five years. The donkey in Africa is worked hard, but is neither unduly maltreated nor misunderstood. Perhaps that is why he lives long, though if the present race of donkey boys, who have been trained at the Paris and Chicago exhibitions, go on their unruly ways now they have got back to their homes at Cairo, Tunis or Algiers, even the patient, sad little donkeys may take on moods that hitherto they have never known.

The horses and donkeys of the big towns may well become spoiled by vanity, for they are often the subjects of an assiduous and inexplicable care on the parts of their owners, who comb their locks, and braid them, and *cosmétique* them and put rouge on their foreheads, and even stain them with henna until they are a regular "Zaza" tint. Darkest Africa is not so backward as one might think!

All classes of native riders, whether on the camel, *mehari*, horse, mule, or donkey, beat the ribs of the creature with a heel-tap tattoo in what must be an annoying manner for the beast. From the way the native, rich or poor, sits on his horse, spurs would be of no use to him, and only the Spahi, or native cavalry, has adopted them.

Donkey riding is the same dubious rocheting proceeding in all Mediterranean countries. It is no worse here than in Greece or on the Riviera. "The donkey's a disgrace," says the Arab; and he runs along behind, beating his onery little beast and calling it a *fille de chacal*, a *graine de calamité* or a *chienne*. This need awaken no sentiments of pity whatever—for the donkey. They are as much terms of endearment as the occasion calls for. The most common four-footed beast of burden in Algeria is undoubtedly the despised donkey of tradition. Every one does seem to despise the donkey, except the Mexican "greaser," who asks as affectionately after his neighbour's *burro* as he

does his wife or children. Here the *bourriquet* or *h'mar* is quite a secondary consideration in the Arab's domestic *entourage*.

The *bourriquet* is an economical little beast, costing only from ten francs upward. He usually feeds himself, browsing as he goes, and trots twenty or thirty kilometres a day, encouraged by the whacks and expletives of his driver who may often be found perched on top of the donkey's load of a hundred and fifty pounds or more.

To us it all savours of cruelty, and perhaps some real cruelty does take place; but much of the "coaxing" of a donkey into his gait is necessary, unless one is disposed to let him stand still for hours at a time, too lazy to do anything but swish and kick the flies away. Æsop's ass prayed to Jove for a less cruel master, but that deity replied that he could not change human nature nor that of donkeys, so things were left to stand as before.

The Arabs often slit the nostrils of their donkeys, on the supposition that the Maker did not fashion them amply enough to allow them to breathe readily. The more readily the donkey breathes, the more capable he is to carry heavy burdens long distances. Logical, this! And the procedure, too, improves the tonal quality of the donkey's bray. Well, perhaps, though most of us are not devotees of that sort of music. Compared to Italy or Spain, there are considerably fewer suffering sore-backed donkeys in Algeria or Tunisia.

There is no question but that for economical service the donkey will kill any horse or mule; and it is clear that, weight for weight and load for load, he daily outdoes the camel. The latter, weighing fifteen hundred pounds, carries perhaps a weight of three to five hundred. The ass weighs two hundred and fifty to four hundred pounds, and, carrying one hundred and fifty to two hundred, outpaces the camel by a mile an hour.

The donkey is guided by the voice, a stick, or a rope

halter, which lies on the left side, and is pulled to turn him to the left, or borne across his neck to turn him to the right. The stick serves the double purpose of striking and guiding, and the stick must needs come into play only too often.

The donkey here in the Mediterranean countries is often very small, not thirty-two inches in many cases, no bigger than a St. Bernard. When one hires a donkey to carry him over an *étape* on some mountain road, it is often a beast from whose back one's toes touch the ground, though one is seated on a pad, not a saddle, and measures only five feet seven.

CHAPTER XI

THE SHIP OF THE DESERT AND HIS OCEAN OF SAND

A CAMEL may be a cumbersome, ungainly and unlovely creature, and may be destined to be succeeded by the automobile, to which he seems to have taken a violent dislike; but there is no underrating the great and valuable part which he has played in the development of the African provinces and protectorates of France. He has borne most of their burdens, literally; has ploughed their fields, pumped their water, and even exploited the tourists, to say nothing of having been the companion of the Mussulman faithful on their pilgrimages.

The camel caravans which set out across the desert from Tlemcen, Tunis, and Constantine (there are no camels nearer Algiers than Arba) are in charge of a very exalted personage,—or he thinks he is. His official title is *gellâby*. Each and every beast of burden is loaded to the limit, and pads his way with his great nubbly hoofs across untold leagues of sand or brush-covered soil without complaint. At every stop, however, and every time a start is made, he

always gives vent to shrieks and groans; but as this procedure takes place at each end of a day's journey as well, it is probably pure bluff, as the camel-sheik claims. To one unused to it the noise seems like the wails which are supposed to come up out of the inferno.

The camel of Africa, so-called, is really not a camel, *he is a dromedary*; the camel has two humps, the dromedary but one, *but camel is the word commonly used*. The two-humped quadruped, then, is a camel,—the direct descendant of the camel of Asia, whilst that of the single hump is the dromedary of Africa. The distinction must be remembered by all who talk or write on the subject, with the same precision that one differentiates between African and Indian elephants.

The camel has by no means the rude health and strength which has so often been attributed to him, indeed he is a very delicate beast and demands a climate dry and hot. Cold and snow and persistent rains are death to a camel. A camel must be well nourished, and with a certain regularity, or he soon becomes ill and dies. He is easily frightened and can spread a panic among his fellows with the rapidity of wild-fire.

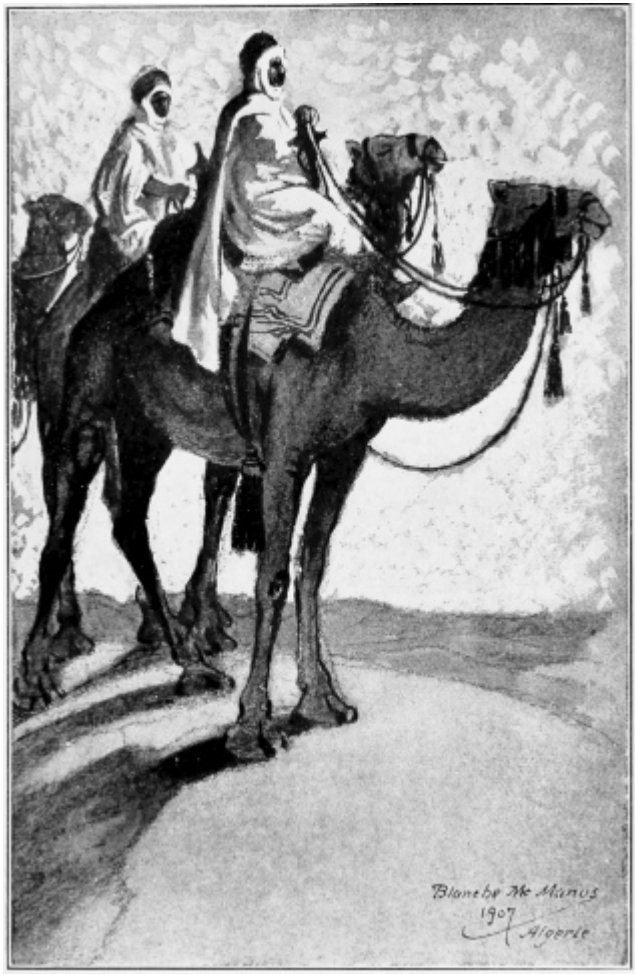
For the most part the camel is kindly and temperate, but he can get in a rage and can be very dangerous to all who approach him on foot.

The camel of the south cannot live in the north and vice versa. They are not acclimated to the varying conditions. One judges a good camel (dromedary) by his hump; firm and hard, it is a sure sign of a good-natured, hard-working, friendly sort of a camel; if flabby and mangy, then beware.

A camel eats normally thirty or forty kilos of fodder a day, and must be allowed four hours to do it in. As to drink, once in two or three days in summer is enough, but in winter he can go perhaps ten days, and his food bill is increased nothing thereby.

He can carry 150-160 kilos, a parcel hung over each side in saddle-bag fashion. The *mehari*, or long-distance, fast-gaited camel of the Sahara, is to the ordinary dromedary what a blooded Arabian is to a Percheron. He can better stand hunger and thirst, and on an average needs drink only once in five days; furthermore is not as liable to fright as is the *djemel*, as the Arab calls the camel, and is more





The Mehari of the Desert

patient and more courageous. Less rapid than a race-horse for short distances, the *mehari*, well-trained and well-driven, can make his hundred kilometres a day, day in and day out.

The saddle is called a *rahala* and has a concave seat, a large, high back, and an elevated pommel. The rider sits in the bowl-like saddle, his legs crossed on the beast's neck.

The *mehari* is driven through a ring in its nose, to which is attached a rope of camel's hair. The beast is somewhat difficult to drive, more so than the *djemel*, and only its master can get good results. To mount, the beast kneels as do ordinary camels.

En route the *mehari* does not graze, but waits for a decent interval and takes its meal comfortably. A *mehari*, not accustomed to the sight of a horse, is often put into a terrible fright thereby. The education of a *mehari* is very difficult; it takes a year to break one.

The policing of the great Saharan tracts would not be possible without troops mounted on *mehara*,—the plural of the word *mehari*,—and France owes much of the development of her African provinces to the *mehari* and the slower-going camel.

The dromedary, or camel, as it is referred to in common speech, was an importation into Algeria away back in some unrecalled epoch, at any rate anterior to the Arab invasion of the eleventh century.

The *mehari* was a warlike beast as far back into antiquity as the days of Herodotus, Tacitus, and Pliny. Herodotus, recounting the battle of Sardes, said, according to Pliny: "*Camelos inter jumeuta pascit Oriens, quorum duo genera Bactriani et Arabici....*"

If an Arab is owner of a thousand camels, he wards off any evil that may befall them by leading out the oldest and blinding it with a rod of white hot iron.

A camel that has fallen ill may be cured, many superstitious Arabs believe, by allowing it to witness the operation of searing the hoofs of another, tied and thrown upon the ground. This is auto-suggestion surely, though where the curative powers come in it is hard to see.

When a *bayra*, a female camel, has given birth to five camels, the last being a male, her ears are bored and she is sent out to pasture, never more to be put to the rough work

of caravaning. Like putting an old horse to pasture in perpetuity, it seems a humane act, and it solves the race question in the camel world, or would if the camels only knew the why and the wherefore.

The camel's feet are admirably made for the sands of the desert; they form by nature a sort of adapted *ski* or snow-shoe. The hoof (though really it is no hoof) is bifurcated and has no horny substance, merely a short, crooked claw, or nail, at the rear of each bifurcation, a sort of elastic sole —the predecessor of rubber heels, no doubt—covering the base. The camel travels well in sand, but with difficulty over stony ground, where frequently the Arabs envelop his feet with cloths or leather wrappings.

The camel possesses further four other callosities, one on each knee, and he uses them all four every time he gets up or lies down. These callous places are something the beast is born with; they get ragged and mangy-looking with time, but they are there from birth.

The boss, or hump, of the camel-dromedary is mere gristle; it contains no bone, and is more or less abundant according to the health of the animal.

A well-fed and happy camel, starting out on a long march, regards his well-rounded hump with pride. Excessive travel and forced marches diminish its shape and size and the beast seemingly becomes ashamed and literally feels sore about it. But, like the conquered general on a battle-field who loses his sword, he ultimately gets it all back again, and a little rest, a change of diet, and a good, long drink—"a camel's neck," you might call it—makes a difference with the camel and his hump in the course of a very few days.

A camel gets unruly and cries out at times, and often becomes unmanageable, but an application of a sticky gob of tar or pitch on his forehead usually quiets him down.

The baby camels usually come into the world one at a

time; and can stand up on their four legs the first day, and run around like their elders at the end of a week.

At the age of four years the young camel is put to work, and carries a rider, two barrels of wine or two gunny-sacks filled with crockery or ironware indiscriminately. His average life is twenty years, and, as with the horse, one reckons his age by his teeth.

The Arab gets an astonishing amount of work out of an apparently unwilling camel. He encourages him with punches, and beatings and oaths and songs. Yes, the Arab camel-driver even sings to his camel to induce him to get along faster, and plays a screechy air on the *galoubet*; and the curious thing is that the flagging energies of a camel will revive immediately his driver begins to drone. It is a custom which has come down from antiquity, and soon one may expect every caravan to carry its own phonograph and megaphone.

The chief of these airs, rendered into French for us by a lisping, blue-eyed Arab, was, as near as may be:—

"Battez pour nous,
Battez pour nous,
O Chameaux!
Battez pour nous,
Battez pour nous,
Chameaux, pour vos maîtres!"

No very great rhyme or rhythm there, but it suits the camel's taste in poesy.

To "vagabond" with a camel caravan would be the very ideal of a simple life. The life of a caravan to-day is as it was in Bible times, except that one carries a "Smith and Wesson" or a "Colt" instead of a spear.

The following essential facts apply to all the camel caravans making their respective ways from the coast towns of the northern provinces down into the Soudan and

the Sahara. The caravan usually makes its day's journey between wells, or at least plans to stop at a source of water at night rather than push on; this in case one has not been previously passed by, and every one become refreshed a short time before.

A dozen to thirty kilometres or so a day is the average commercial caravan journey,—for a part of the outfit walks, it must be remembered,—and an eight or ten weeks' itinerary is the duration of the average journey. Such food as is carried is generally of pounded dates and figs in the form of a paste, which the dry climate more or less petrifies.

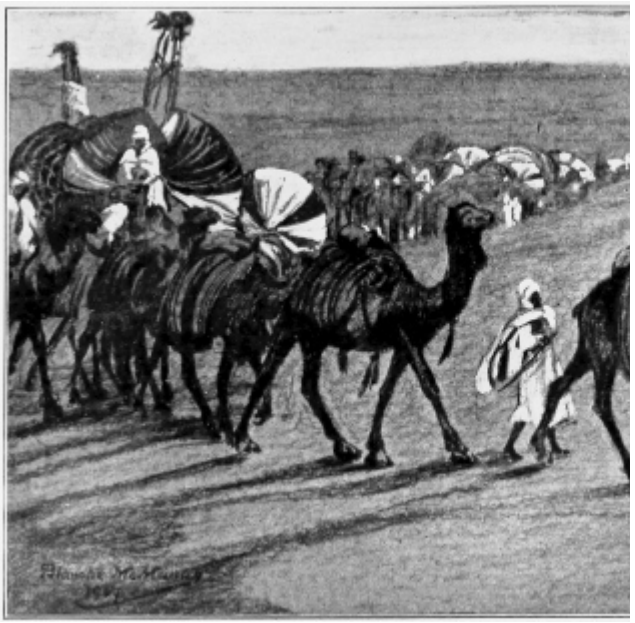
The Arab trader, the chief of the trading caravan, and the city merchant *en voyage*, be he Arab. Turk, or Jew, is a man of position, the others are mere helpers, employés or perhaps slaves.

At each important halting-place of a caravan the Sheik's great tent is unstrapped from its camel bearer and set up on a *pied de terre* in as likely a spot as may be found. The Arab tent is no haphazard shack or shelter; it is a thing of convention, and has its shape and size laid down by tradition.

The great central post or pillar has a height of two and a half metres, and the *perches*, or entrance posts, have a height of two metres, and a considerable inclination, whereas the central one is perpendicular.

The tent proper, the covering, is invariably of





A Desert Caravan

alternate black and brown or brown and white woollen bands, sewn together with a stout thread of camel's-hair. These bands are called *felidj* and have a width usually of seventy-five centimetres.

Within there is no furniture properly called, simply the provision for a nomad life, sacks of grain, dates, figs or olives, a few pots and pans, harness, etc., and a few smaller sacks or bags, *cachettes*, where the womenfolk hide their earrings, corals, and brooches. These last are usually used as pillows at night. It is a law of somebody—perhaps the Prophet—that none of the Arabs' tent accessories must be of wood or iron, save the tent poles, which are of both, being made of wood and shod with iron; thus all utensils and other furnishings are of skins or mats, and dishes of woven grass, and all cords are of spun camel's-hair. A few copper pots and pans there are of necessity, and a few rude crockery bowls.

The desert caravans form to-day the same classic pictures as of yore as they thread the trails and paths, obscure and involved enough to the stranger, but plain sailing to the chief or guide of a caravan who precedes the following "squadrons" as a Malay pilot precedes his ship.

"At the head of his dusty caravan,
Laden with treasures from realms afar
. . . . . .
Through the clouds of dust by the caravan raised
Came the flash of harness and jewelled sheath."

The chief of a tribe, or even a caravan, is a very grand personage among his fellows, and when he is *en route* rides apart and sleeps in a palanquin or *attouch*, an *attouch* being no other thing than a cabin on a ship; here a cabin on the ship of the desert.

The *attouch*, to be *à la mode*, must have a tall, chimney-like ventilator rising in the middle and tipped with ostrich plumes. Generally this retreat is large enough to shelter two persons,—always persons of importance in an ostrich-feather-tipped *attouch*, a sheik and his favourite wife, for example.

The caravans of to-day vary in size from a dozen to fifty camels to a train of four, five, or seven hundred (in Tripoli). Under certain conditions, after a long journey, the camel carriers—the freighters—are usually allowed to rest a matter of days, weeks, or even months, according to the lack of necessitous conditions for pushing on and for recuperation. One of the chief trading towns of the Tripoli caravans to-day in Africa is Kano, a place ruled by a native chief and inhabited by a black population. The chief, for a consideration, affords shelter and protection, and the Arabs of the caravan open up shop and do business in the real county-fair style that they knew before county fairs were even thought of. Native products are bought or traded for in return, and such currency as passes is a sort of wampum

made of shells and a few Maria Theresa dollars. Barter, or mere swapping, with a bonus on one side or the other, is the usual caravan Arabs' idea of merchandizing, and the European can as often get a native-made woollen burnous or a camel's-hair blanket by the exchange of a "dollar watch" or a "Seth Thomas clock," as he can by giving up two or three gold *louis*.

The proper benediction to cast down on the head of any Sheik who may have shown you a courtesy *en route* is to say in simple French:—"*Merci, noble Sheik, de ta générosité. Que la bénédiction d'Allah descende sur toi, sur tes femmes, tes enfants, tes troupeaux et ta tribu.*" If you can give him a slab of milk chocolate or a piece of "pepsin" chewing gum, he will appreciate that, too.

The negroes and negresses accompanying the caravans walk, but the Arab either rides camel-back or horseback, like the veritable king of his own little kingdom, which, virtually, every Arab is when he is on the open plain.

The Touaregs, south of Touggourt, one of the real, genuine, Simon-pure tribes of desert Arabs, are not given to the trafficking and merchandizing of those who live down on the coast. Their chief, and in many cases, sole occupation consists in catering for the migratory caravan outfits, selling them dates and mutton and water, for if a Touareg can discover anywhere an unworked oasis with a spring, he has got something which to him is very nearly as good as a gold mine.

Among the Touaregs there are blacks and whites; the whites dress like the conventional Arabs, but the blacks after a fashion more like that of the savage blacks further south. The three superimposed blouses are never too great a weight or thickness for the genuine Arab, even in the blazing furnace of the Sahara. They ward off heat and cold alike.

One of Napoleon's famous sayings, forgotten almost in

favour of others still more famous, was: “Of all obstacles which oppose an army on the march, the greatest, the most difficult to remove, is the desert.”

One imagines the desert as a great, flat,



THE ILLIMITABLE DESERT

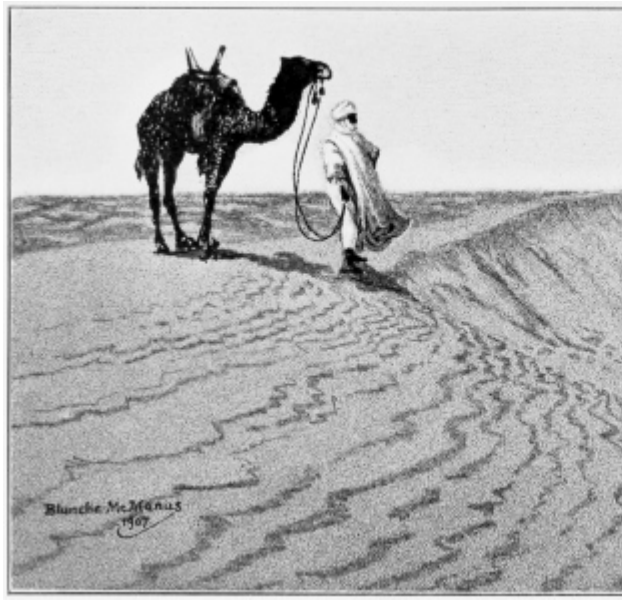
sandy plain with illimitable horizons, like the flat bed of a dried-out ocean. This is a misconception of our youth, brought about by too diligent an application to the precepts of the copy-book and the school geography. All things are possible in the *vrai désert*. The oasis is not the only interpolation in the monotonous landscape. There are great *chotts* or marsh tracts, even depressions where a murky alkaline water, unfit for man or beast, is always to be found, vast stretches of rocky plateau, great dunes of sand and even jutting peaks of bare and wind-swept rock, with surfaces as smooth as if washed by the waves of the ocean. These are the common desert characteristics throughout

the Sahara, from the Gulf of Gabès to the Moroccan frontier and beyond. Occasionally there are the palpable evidences of new-made volcanic soil, and even granite and sandstone eminences half buried in some engulfing wave of sand swept up by the last sirocco that passed that way.

Over all, however, is an evident and almost impenetrable haze. At a certain moment of one's progress in the desert, he sees nothing of distinction before or behind or right or left, and at the next finds himself close to a pyramid of rock fifty feet high. Really the desert is very bewildering and enigmatic, and the Arab who navigates it with his caravan is like the sailor on the deep sea. He has to take his bearings every once and again or he is lost and perhaps engulfed.

It is the fashion to write and speak of the mystery of the desert, but in truth there is no mystery about it, albeit its moods are varied and inexplicable at times. To the solitary traveller there is an interest in the desert unknown to seas, or mountains, or even to rolling





The Sand Dunes of the Desert

prairies. Above is a sky of stainless beauty, and the splendour of a pitiless, blinding glare; the sirocco caresses you like a lion with flaming breath; all round lie drifted sand-heaps, where the wind leaves its trace in solid waves. Flayed rocks are here, skeletons of mountains, and hard, unbroken, sun-dried plains, over which he who rides is spurred by the idea that the bursting of a water-skin, or the pricking of a camel's hoof, would be a certain lingering death of torture. The springs seem to cry the warning words, "Drink and away!" There is nothing mysterious or dull about such a land, indeed it is very real and exciting, and man has as much opportunity here as anywhere of measuring his forces with Nature's, and of emerging, if possible, triumphant from the trial. This explains the Arab's proverb: "Voyaging is victory." In the desert, even more than upon the ocean, there is present death; hardship is there, and piracy, and ship-wreck.

Newcomers to Algeria and Tunisia talk of the monotonous calm of the sand dunes of the desert; but those who know its silences best find nothing monotonous about them. It is as the automobilist expresses it with regard to the great tree-lined "Routes Nationales" of France—"there is sameness, but not monotony." One does not become ennuied in the desert. He may be alone within a circle of many miles radius, but each glint and glimmer of sunlight, each leaping gazelle and Saharan hare—really a jack-rabbit—keeps him company, and when a camel caravan or a patrol of Spahis rises on the horizon, he feels as "crowded" as he would in a "bridge crush" in New York, or on the Boulevard des Italiens on a fête-day.

Here at one side is a shepherd's striped tent, surrounded by bleating sheep and goats and tended by a lean, lonesome Arab who is apparently bored stiff with lonesomeness. His is a lonesome life indeed, like that of a shepherd anywhere, and when night comes—often drear and chill even in the Sahara—he slips under his tent flap, pulls his burnous up around his ears and trusts to luck that no jackal will make away with a kid or lamb while he sleeps. He is not paid to sleep by the owner of the flock (a franc and a quarter a day, out of which he feeds himself), but still, sleep he must. Fatigue comes even to a lazy Arab sheep-herder, and he'd rather fall sound asleep beside a brazier inside his tent than doze intermittently before a fire of brushwood in the open. Who would not, at a franc and a quarter a day; particularly as the day includes the night! There is no eight-hour day in the desert.

Before he sleeps, he munches a "*pain Arab*" and pulls his *matoui* from his belt, from which he fills his pipe with *kif* and soon smokes himself into insensibility. Poor sheep and goats, what may not happen to them whilst their guardian is in his paradise of burnt hemp!

In the little oasis settlements where there are natural springs, and not at the *Bordjs* or government posts of

relays, one's sight is gladdened with flowering fig and almond blooms or fruits and bizarre spiny cacti with pink laurel and palms in all the subtropical profusion of a happy sunlight land. The chief characteristics of an oasis are the superb giant palm-trees, their *aigrettes* reaching skywards almost to infinity, the azure blue cut into fantastic, fairy shapes, which no artist can paint and no kodakist snap in all their fleeting grace.

Here dwell a few score of sheep, goat, horse, or camel owning Arabs, who mysteriously live off of nothing at all, except when they sell a kid or a baby camel to a passing caravan. It is the simple life with a vengeance! And the children play about in the shadow of the tents naked as worms, and, as they grow up, marry, and adopt by instinct the same idle life. They know no ideas of progress, and perhaps are the happier for it.

The colour effects in the desert are things to make an artist rave. The dunes change colour with each hour of the day, and the silver light of the sunrise and the streaky blood-red and orange of the sunsets are marvels to be seen nowhere else on earth.

The temperature in the desert frequently changes with a suddenness that would be remarked in Paris, the place par excellence in Europe where the changes in temperature are most trying; or in Marseilles, where, from a subtropical summer sun, one can be transplanted on the breath of the *mistral* into the midst of an Alpine winter in the twinkling of an eye. Fifty degrees centigrade at high noon in the desert may be followed by ten degrees at midnight. That's a change of seventy-two degrees Fahrenheit, and that's something.

CHAPTER XII

SOLDIERS SAVAGE AND CIVILIZED—LÉGIONNAIRES

AND SPAHIS

ALGERIA is guarded by an army of 60,000 men. But they keep the peace only, for there is no warfare in Algeria or Tunisia to-day. In the days of the Roman legions less than half that number of men fought for and held all North Africa. France recognizes that the development of a new country depends more upon the military than all else. The Spahis, the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, and the *Légionnaires* have won most of France's battles in Algeria; and for this reason these great colonial corps are given a high place in the military establishment.

When they have fought they have fought well, and when they have died they have died gloriously. The last "little affair" was in 1903, when a hundred Spahis and horsemen of the Legion were attacked at El-Moungar, near the Moroccan frontier. They fought like lions until reinforcements arrived, and but thirty odd remained alive. Among the *Légionnaires* who died were a Spanish captain and a German lieutenant, for the *Légion Étrangère* demands nothing of any who would enlist in its ranks but his name and an affirmative to the question—"Will you fight?" The survivors of this engagement all received the *Médaille Coloniale* and the Saharan Clasp.

Now a more important move in the military game is being played across the frontier in Morocco itself, and 12,000 of Algeria's native soldiery is cast for the chief rôle. The soldiers of the Foreign Legion are of all nationalities under the sun. Some of them are scoundrels, no doubt, or were until military discipline made them brace up, but others are as refined as the gentleman and officer of convention.

We met many Italians, Swiss, Germans, and Irishmen, and the Germans were not Alsatians, either, but real *Platt-deutsch*, from Bremen. In more than one instance they had been drummed out of their own regiment for some

disgrace and enlisted anew in France's *Légion Étrangère* that they might begin life over again. The real soldier of fortune exists nowhere in so large a proportion as in this corps.

Certain of the French troops in Africa are not usually the flower of the army, often they are *disciplinaires* sent out from home. At any rate when you see one of them robbing a poor peanut merchant who solicited him to buy *dis nois poeur uné sous*, you are quite ready to believe he needs disciplining. The Arab under such circumstances gives the *tou-tou* a tongue-lashing, which for invective could hardly be equalled: "*Infamous belly of a snake*," "*Canaille*," "*Sale yondi, where is your politeness*," "*Ouf, I'll ram another handful down your camel throat and charge you nothing, either—salop de cochon!*" The Arab is fast becoming Frenchified, as the above will indicate.

The next minute the seller of *cacaoettes*—which is a prettier name for peanuts than we have—turns to you calmly and says humbly: "*Pardon, Sidi, will you buy some nuts?*" And you buy them, ten sous worth, which is enough money in hand to keep him for twenty-four hours, just because he is so good an actor.

The sixty odd thousand regular soldiery in Algeria are virtually military police and civil engineers. The Arab-Berber population are no more likely to revolt, though they did it successfully enough in 1871, when France thought she had them subdued; and so, as a sort of police precaution, France keeps a very active army on the spot. If a nation possesses a vast territory, it must be policed somehow, and this is the French idea of doing it, for in the above number are counted the *gendarmerie* or national police.

One romantic character stands out plainly in the history of Algeria in these later years, and that is Yusuf, the name of the ideal native soldier who was a prodigious figure of the early nineteenth century. His personality was most

strange. Bearer of an Arab name, he was the personification of a chivalrous military heroism consecrated to a country not his own; and France, contrary to her usual procedure, has seemingly neglected his fame and that of his descendants.

It was to Yusuf, in effect, that was due the security of the environs of Algiers from the conquest of 1833 to the extinction of the revolt of 1871. From the first landing of General Bourmont, the deliverer of Algeria, Yusuf was employed in every possible capacity; and the ancient slave of the Turkish ruler and the favourite of the Bey of Tunis became the symbol of law and progress. His *sabre* was henceforth to be used for Christianity, and not on behalf of paganism and rapine. Yusuf at the head of his Spahis is a noble and imposing figure of the African portrait gallery. He is almost invariably young, splendid of form and fastidious and luxurious in his dress; a superb romantic dream of the Orient, but adaptable and capable of absorbing European ideas.

Authors, artists, and princes have attempted to idealize Yusuf, but the task was futile. Louis-Philippe, Louis Bonaparte, Alexandre Dumas, Gautier, Horace Vernet, Delacroix, and Bugeaud have sung his praises afar; but he remains to-day the unspoiled, faithful servant of a government and faith as foreign to his own as the red Indian is to the Parisian.

Homage! Frenchmen and Algerians, and all others who know and love the land which smiles so bravely under the African sun, to Yusuf the warrior, the diplomat, and *chien fidèle*!

The Spahis, or native soldiery, made up from the Yusufs of all Algeria, are in great repute with their European officers, whatever the bureaucrats of the Boulevard Saint Germain may think. To the former he has:

“La main toujours ouverte,

Le sabre toujours tiré,
Une seule parole,"

and he is obedient to his superiors. This is a good formula upon which to mould a soldier.

The Spahis and Turcos of Algeria fought for France, too, on the mainland, in that unhappy and unnecessary "woman's war" with Germany in 1871. The Germans protested against the employment of these "savages;" but the precept was England's when she enlisted the red man against the North American colonist in 1776, and then, too, she hired Hessians for the job (who were Germans) and according to the traditionary tales concerning those mercenaries, they came about as near being "savages" as anything which ever walked on two feet.

The "Chanson du Spahi" is a classic in the land. It recounts in dulcet French phrase the whole life of one of these noble native soldiery enlisted in the ranks of the French army organization.

It is a veritable Odyssey, commencing with:—

"J'é'tais jeune, le cadet dans la tente de mon père.
Le cadet de ses fils beaux comme des lions,"

and ending with:—

"Qui pleurera sur la tombe du soldat orphelin."

The Spahi's costume is fearfully and wonderfully made. It is gorgeous beyond that of



A Capitan of Spahi

any other soldiery; and yet it is most suitable for campaigning after the Spahi fashion. The waving burnous, the *haïk*, the broidered vest, the turban wound with camel's-hair, red boots, and much gold braid make the Spahi dazzling to behold.

When it comes to the accoutrements of his horse the same thing is true. His saddle is a veritable seat, not a mere pad, and weighs ten times as much as a European saddle, his stirrups alone weighing as much. Instead of a single

blanket, the Spahi trooper has a half a dozen variegated saddle-cloths, very spectacular, if not useful.

The barracks of the native soldiers in Algeria are bare, but with European fitments of iron bedsteads, etc. The religion of the Mussulman does not demand, nor indeed permit pictures or images of his God; and so, any substitute for the *ikons* of the Russian, and the crucifixes of the French soldier are absent.

In Algeria, besides the Spahis and the *tirailleurs*, each so picturesque whenever grouped with the North African landscape, there is a special field force of men from the south, pure Arab types, men of the desert, and scouts of the very first rank. All these military types are what is defined as native voluntary soldiery, the *indigène* not being subject to military conscription. Perhaps they are the better soldiers for this, since they adopt it voluntarily as a profession, but a discussion of the subject is not one of sufficient moment to take space here.





Each tribe of the south—whose civil administration, be it recalled, is in the hands of the native Sheik and the Cadi—is bound to furnish, at the need of the French government, whether for service within the limits of Algeria or out of it, a group of a certain proportionate size of able-bodied fighting men. These voluntary fighters of the open country, known as *goums*, are versed in many of the wiles of warfare of which the garrison-trained soldier is ignorant; and, upon a simple requisition, the chief of a tribe is bound to furnish his quota of these plainsmen. It is a duty owed to the French government for the protection and lawful status which it gives each individual tribe and its members; and this soldiery is not only voluntary, but serves, without salary, drawing only munitions of war and nourishment from the public war-chest, and furnishing even its own horses and guns.

The *goum* is a picturesque and original type of soldier. He rides a stocky Arabian horse, gaily caparisoned with a

gaudy parti-coloured harness and saddle-cloth, and sits in a high-backed saddle, as if on a throne. His costume is fascinating, if crude, in the flowing lines of his burnous, his boots of bright red or yellow leather, and his great high-crowned straw hat, like no other form of head-gear on earth except the Mexican's *sombrero*. He is proud of his occupation, and would rather fight than eat, at least one judges that this is the case in that he fights for France without pay.

The *goums* are a sort of savage soldiery, if you like to think of them as such, but they are not *guerillas*. Their efficacy in various little wars has been tried and tried again; and, recently, in Morocco, the first successful raids into the open country of the fanatical Moroccans were only made possible by the lances of a column of *goums* which only the day before had landed at Casablanca from the steamer from Oran. Regular soldiery has to get acclimated when fighting in a new and untried country, but the *goum* of the Sud-Algerien got down to business immediately in Morocco and gave the French a firm grasp on things, whilst the regular troops, also imported from the plains of Algeria, were getting used to the mountains, and the garrison troops of Tizi-Ouzou were trying to adapt themselves to the mode of life necessary for good health in a seaport town. The ways of most War Departments in moving troops about from one strategic point to another have ever been erratic, and that of the French is no exception. The *goum* of Algeria saved the day for France in Algeria, and perhaps by the time these lines are printed will





A Goum

have added another gem to the colonial diadem of France. If not so soon, why later on.

There is a current story in military circles in Algeria concerning the gift of an Arab chief to a French general commanding a division. It was not gold or jewels or goods of any kind, but a simple, secret admonition: "*Never trust*

an Arab—not even me." With variations this may be true enough, but the average traveller among these now loyal French citizens will have no cause to regret any little confidences he may commit to a friendly Arab or Berber; though, of the two, the latter being certainly the more faithful.

The railway, the telegraph, and the military have developed Algeria to what it is to-day. The Arab originally did not love the French, indeed he had no cause to, for they came and overran his country and put down abuses which he did not wish to have put down; but he has become philosophical, and has recognized that the iron horse forms a better means of transport than his mules and camels for the stuffs and goods of his trade and barter. He is commercial enough to want to do more business and make more money, so he tolerates the French; and, since his first experiences with the new order of things, he has prospered beyond his wildest dreams. That has civilized and subdued the Arab in French Africa. It would subdue any savage.

The *fantasia* is the classic diversion and showing-off pace of Algeria's Spahi cavalry. No great function, local or otherwise, is complete without a *fantasia*, and here the Spahi is at his uncontrolled best. He rides dashingly around the field of the manœuvres, slashing with his sword at a leathern dummy of a man or a wooden ball on the top of a post, or with his stocky carbine shoots from the saddle, leaps hurdles, or throws his firearm high in the air and catches it again on its fall. All the time his charger is rushing about wildly and without method. The whole is a veritable military orgie of target-shooting, steeplechasing, marching and countermarching, and all with as picturesque a personnel and costuming as a circus.

It is mimic savage warfare uncontrolled, and far more real and warlike than the goose-step evolutions of European armies. The fantasia is a spontaneous, every-man-on-his-own sort of an affair. The smell of gunpowder

is in the air, and no Wild West or Cossack horseman ever gave half so vivid an example of agility as does a Spahi or a *goum* on his African *jour de fête*.

CHAPTER XIII

FROM ORAN TO THE MOROCCO FRONTIER

THE western gateway to French Africa is through Oran, which, with its 88,000 inhabitants, is the second city of Algeria. Its chief attraction for the tourist who has seen, or is about to see, the rest of the country is its magnificent site and the recollection of the momentous history of its past.

The most striking characteristic of its life and manners is the manifest Spanish influence which is over all, a relic of days gone by. Even the chief city gate, the Porte d'Espagne, still bears the ornamental escutcheons of the old Madrillenian governors; and, three kilometres distant from the centre of the town, are the celebrated "*Bains de la Reine*," a remembrance of the epoch when Jeanne, "La Folle," daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella, the mother of Charles V, took the baths there in state, "in company with a brilliant cortège of knights and ladies." Bathing was more of a public ceremony then than now, evidently.

One aspect of the life at Oran which one does not remark elsewhere is the numbers of Moroccans who slowly amble up and down, doing nothing, and living apparently in some mysterious fashion. The Moroccan of to-day is the typical Berber of our imagination, swarthy, lithe, and scraggy-bearded. He is not lovely to look upon, but he is picturesque.

One of the chief sights to be noted in the markets of Oran is the fruit market; and the principal article of commerce is the grenadine, a historic and classic fruit, and

the one the most in favour with the Arab or Berber of simple tastes. It is not without reason that he chooses this delicious fruit; for it is food and drink in one. D'Annunzio called the grenadine an "*écrin en cuir vermeil, surmonté de la couronne d'un roi donateur*," and the description is faithful and poetic enough for any man. The Arab *toubibs*, or doctors, believe it to be an efficacious remedy for all ills, and that its seed originally descended from the skies, a gift from Heaven to struggling humanity. It is certainly very beneficent as a remedy for tropical fevers.

One will strain his eyes trying to hunt out more than a few of the vestiges of the old Oran of the Spaniards. The French have very nearly wiped them out. It was a great port in the days of the Romans, and between that time and the Spanish occupation it had a long history. The Mohammedans founded a town here a thousand years ago; and, about the time Columbus was sailing around the West Indian island trying to find a new way to the Orient, a Spanish author wrote that Oran had six thousand houses, a hundred and forty mosques, and schools and colleges equal to those of Cordova, Granada and Seville. It was sometime after this that Oran became Spanish, and in turn it reverted to the banished Moors, to become French in 1831.

Oran's evolution from Spanish to French is interesting. It was once a penal colony of Spain, where from seven to ten thousand wicked unfortunates sweltered under an African sun, laying the foundations of the present fortifications. The memory of this Spanish occupation is everywhere, but it is a memory only and is continually growing more vague. The soldiers of Islam captured Costechica from the Spaniards, and the French came in turn and took it and called it Oran.

Oran, like the rest of the North African coast cities and towns, is polyglot in its people and its architecture. The Orient rubs shoulders with the Far West, and the mingling is more astonishing and picturesque than delightful. A red

fez, an alpaca coat, and white duck trousers is a bizarre effect, so is a bowler hat and a burnous. Joseph's coat of many colours was not more gaudy than that of many a Berber or Arab one sees to-day in Oran. The Sultans of other days have given way to an army Commandant, who, if he is a more practical person, is usually a less artistic one, and his influence is reflected in all his surroundings.

The two religious monuments of Oran are celebrated throughout all Algeria. The cathedral of St. Louis is a stronghold of the Christian church and an imposing, if not a very elegant, structure; whilst the Grande Mosquée, with the most remarkable and quaint octagonal minaret in all Algeria, was built by a former *pacha* of Algiers with the money coming from the sale of Christian slaves. These two edifices well illustrate two opposing points of view, but they are both religious monuments.

If you can stand a mountain climb from Oran, go up the slope of Mount Mourdjadja, and have what a German authority has discovered to be the most impressive view in the world. The distance is but a few kilometres and the means of communication is shanks' mare. Majorca and Almeria on the coast of Spain may, it is said, be seen on a fine day. We have our doubts! The climb is the classic, conventional thing to do, however, if time permits.

Oran, like Algiers, Bona, and Philippeville, has become Europeanized, Frenchified. Four-fifths of its population is native, but ask a Frenchman and he will tell you: "*Il n'y a rien d'exotique, c'est Paris.*" This shows that the Frenchman frequents the French part of the town, and knows little of the hidden charm which exists on the fringe. He knows the Arab as an inferior menial, or a possible customer for his goods, but he knows nothing of his life, and cares less.

The chief reason for coming to Oran at all is that it is the most convenient starting-point for Tlemcen. Tlemcen, lying well over to the Moroccan frontier, but linked with

Oran by railway, is, in its plan and manner of life, the most original city in North Africa, the most captivating, and the least spoiled by modern innovations. It was the Pomaria of the Romans and enjoys to-day the same admirable belt of wooded shade that it did in those far-off days.

Tlemcen under Arab rule was sovereign of all the Moghreb, one of the great capitals of the Khalifs, the rival of Granada, Kairouan, Damascus, Cairo, and Bagdad.

Above its rocky-red substructure the walls and minarets of Tlemcen still pierce the azure sky, but no longer do the Sultans rule its people. A wild, untamed, savage soldiery has given place to French civil and military rule, and everybody is the more happy therefore. The Méchouar, the ancient palace of the Sultans, is an abandoned ruin, and the *caserne* of the Spahis and the *Chasseurs d'Afrique* now stand for a superior variety of law and order. The architecture of the Moors is at its very best at Tlemcen, even the fragmentary dilapidated remains in hidden-away corners are often the rival of the gems of the Alhambra itself.

Tlemcen is the most splendid and gracious artists' paradise in Algeria. A roving Frenchman whom we met at Algiers, and who painted better than he versified, wrote the following for us on the back of his card which he gave us as an introduction to the patron of the Hotel de France at Tlemcen.

"Il n'est pas une cité
Qui dispute, sans folie,
A Tlemcen la jolie
La pomme de la beauté
Et qui gracieuse étale
Plus de pompe orientale
Sous un ciel plus enchanté."

To-day at Tlemcen, more than in any other place in Algeria, one sees vestiges of the Moorish art and

civilization of the days before the conquest, sculpturings in wall and gate, and tiny cupolas and minarets of a period greatly anterior to most others of their class. The fragmentary remains of Tlemcen's sixty mosques existing in the sixteenth century spring into view here and there, at each turning, in bewildering fashion. Tlemcen is in its decadence however, for from a city of 125,000 souls it has dried up to one of 30,000, of which perhaps a tenth part are European.

Tlemcen has many mosques, of which three must be noted as having been "viewed and remarked," as the antiquarians put it. The Grande Mosquée is the least grand, but it has a fine tower; the smallest mosque, that of Djama l'Hassen, is the most beautiful, and the best example of genuine Moorish architecture and decoration; the Mosque of El Haloui is the most daintily ornamented and most charming. The others dwindle down to ruined nothingness. Out of fifty-seven other minor mosques, most have been converted into cafés, shops, dwellings and sheep-folds, some are in ruins and some have disappeared entirely, but it is these unexpected fragments of a one-time splendour that makes the charm and value of Tlemcen for the artist.

The native life of Tlemcen is another great feature for the stranger, and a caravan of savage-looking creatures from Morocco is no unusual sight on a market day. How the late "disturbances" in Morocco are going to affect the interstate traffic remains to be seen. Probably the interstate part of it will be wiped out, and France will absorb it all, as she ought to do, whatever England and Germany may think. France has made a success in governing Mohammedans; the others have not. Jews, Ethiopians, and Arabs all people Tlemcen. That is what makes it so interesting to-day, and the types seem to be purer than elsewhere.

In the third century Tlemcen underwent a formidable siege at the hand of a Soudanese and his followers. The

assailants were as tenacious as the defenders, and many times were obliged to retreat. It was one of the remarkable sieges of history. The would-be invaders built houses to replace their tents which were no protection against the rude climate they were forced to undergo for a protracted period, as did the Spaniards of Santa Fé under the walls of Granada. Less fortunate than Ferdinand and Isabella, the enemies of the Khalifas of Tlemcen were obliged to retreat, abandoning their fortifications on the height, which the besieged, however, disdained to occupy. It is thus that the fortifications of Mansourah have remained unoccupied for six hundred years, an ignoble monument to a campaign that failed.

The countryside roundabout is fresh and thickly grown with a subtropical African flora, but the snows of a rigorous winter—which occasionally rest on the hillsides for weeks at a time—give a weird, contrasting effect hard to reconcile with the topographical and architectural features of the landscape. The sight of Mansourah under a snowy blanket is one of the surprises which one, who twenty-four hours before left the vine-clad hillsides of Médea and the plains of orange groves neighbouring upon Blida, will never forget.

The legend of the Mosque of Mansourah is a classic among the Arabs who inhabit the mountain city of Tlemcen. A negro king of the Soudan, who himself as well as his followers were Mussulmans, invaded the region beyond the Atlas and laid siege to Tlemcen. So long and well-sustained was the siege that the invading army sought to build a mosque in their midst. A sort of competition was held, and the winners were a Jew and an Arab. The Soudanese king was at first embarrassed, and then enlightened by a happy idea which church-building committees might well adopt. He commissioned the Arab to proceed with the construction of the interior of the mosque, the Jew to be responsible for the exterior. A

wonderful struggle took place, in which all the arts and ingenuities of the two races were brought to play, and which resulted in one of the most splendid of all Arab mosques.

The warrior king was highly pleased, and, calling the builders before him, said, frankly, that he had no words to express his satisfaction, nor ideas as to how they might be recompensed. The thing dragged for a time, as payment of architects' bills has ever done; and partisanship so got the influence of the better instincts of the king that, while he gave the faithful Mussulman builder many purses filled with gold, he condemned the "dog of an infidel Jew" to be imprisoned in the upper gallery of the minaret, for having dared to even penetrate the holy edifice. It never occurred to the dusky monarch that the procedure was defiling the shrine still more.

"Escape if you can," the Jew was told, as he was conducted to his prison. He did escape, after a fashion, so says the legend; for he made himself a pair of wings out of reeds and silks and cords; and, just as the blood-red sun plumped down behind the mountains of the Atlas, he launched himself in air. Like most flying-machine experimenters before and since, however, the daring innovator came forthwith to grief, falling precipitately at the base of the structure and smashing his skull.

He died almost instantly, but before he expired he uttered a final imprecation; the earth trembled, the thunder rolled, and the lightning blasted the minaret, which fell, as it may be seen to-day, lying almost *en bloc*, at full length, on the ground.

The same legend has its counterpart, with variations, in other lands, but it is as likely to be true of the Mosque of Mansourah as of the Cathedral of Orgis in Roumania, or at Cologne, in Crete or in Scandinavia. Legend was spread broadcast, even in the dark ages, by a system of "wireless" which has not yet been improved upon.

Beyond Tlemcen the nearest Algerian settlement of size to the Moroccan frontier is Lalla-Marnia, twenty-four kilometres only from the centre of the late insurrection at Oudjda, now occupied by the French. The name of this advanced post comes from that of a sainted woman buried in a tiny *kouba* near the military camp. The place was always a strategic point, and formed the military frontier post of a band of Syrian invaders, who gave it originally the name of *Numerus Syrorum*.

Lalla-Marnia and Oudjda, one on Algerian soil and the other in Moroccan territory, separated by twenty-five kilometres of sandy roadway, bear each other a sisterly resemblance. The fêtes of Lalla-Marnia, with *fantasias* and horse-races and a savage feasting of the natives, are followed by their counterpart at Oudjda a week later. Needless to say the fêtes are as yet unspoiled by non-contemporary interpolations.

North from Lalla-Marnia is the little townlet of Nédroma, whose clannish inhabitants are one and all descended from the Moors of Andalusia. The type here is the purest in North





Arab Mosque of Beni-Ounif

Africa, and the custom which binds them together, presumably as a *totem* or prevention against marrying with outsiders, is most curious. Each head of a family guards preciously the key of the paternal house in Spain, the same with which his ancestors locked their doors when they fled at the time of the expulsion of their race from the peninsula. Every one of the Moors of Nédroma expects some day, when the great bell sounds the tocsin of

revenge, to return and take up life anew in Andalusia.

Away to the south of Tlemcen, or from Perrégaux, if one follows the railway, runs the road to far Sahara of the Sud-Oranais. Ain-Séfra, Beni-Ounif and Figuig are not even names known to the average outsider, albeit they have already achieved a certain prominence among geographers. Here the *habitants*, their manner of living, and their architecture take on a complexion quite different from anything known among the tribes of the north. All is blended with a savage crudeness which is alike exotic and picturesque. The Moorish mosques of the north give way to a severe Arab manner of building which is formidable and massive in outline and grim throughout. Mud, baked mud of a dingy red, packed together with straw and propped and bolstered here and there with the trunks of the palm-tree, are the chief characteristics of the Saharan Arab's place of worship and of his dwelling as well. The contrasting descent from the beauties of the Mauresque variety is astonishing.

Throughout the Sud-Oranais civilization of the European brand is fast spreading; the railway and the telegraph have reached Figuig and beyond, and absinthe—of a particularly forceful brew—can be had in the cafés, also Swedish matches (made in Belgium) and clay pipes (from Holland). Not long since all was a desert waste, but the "*Légionnaires*," that mixed crew of nation-builders propagated by the French military authorities, went down into the interior and traced roads and built fortifications until this anonymous work came to be succeeded by that of merchants and traders of all creeds.

One finds the "*kif*" shops at every little village *en route*, often where he will not even find a "*café maure*." Frequently in the towns these dens are relegated to a site without the walls, but they huddle as closely to the centre of affairs as the authorities will allow.

Architecturally and artistically they are but vile,

unlovely holes, lighted usually by a single



A Kif Shop

œil hanging from the middle rafters. Most likely this *œil* is a fifty-cent barn lantern, made after the real Connecticut pattern, probably in Belgium or Germany. The oil that it burns is not even American; the "*Standard*" here in the Mediterranean is often Russian—put up in American tins. However, now that King Leopold of Belgium has gone into partnership with "*Standard*" representatives in the rubber business of the Congo, it's only fair to suppose there may be a Rockefeller interest in the Russian oil trade.

These *fumeries de kif* are to all intents and purposes low-class cafés, peopled with all the nomad riffraff of the Mediterranean from Mogador to Crete. Seemingly no one is proprietor, but each shuffles around for himself

regardless of any apparent reckoning to come. It is a picturesque setting indeed for a theatre of crime.

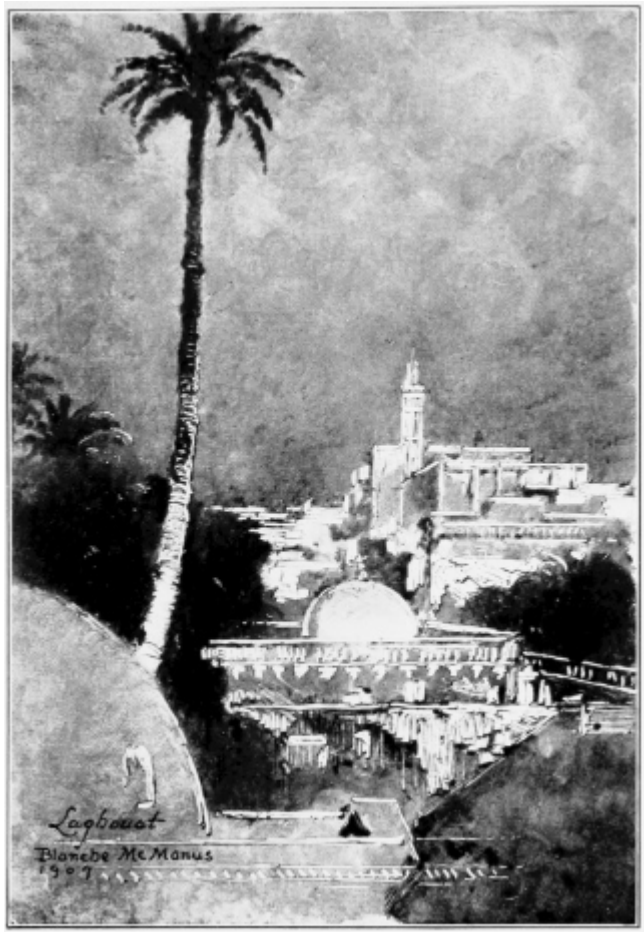
For furnishings, a straw mat covers a part of the floor, and a few cushions of grimy embroidered, or embossed, leather are backed up against the wall here and there. A great carven coffer, presumably a strong box containing the stock, ends the catalogue, if one excepts the now smoke-dimmed arabesques and horseshoe arched decorations of the walls themselves.

In one we saw tied a bald-headed vulture, a dirty fowl, and an itinerant blind musician with a tanned skin, twanging out minor chords on a *gambri*, or Arab guitar with two strings, and those not even catgut, but a poor Arab substitute therefor.

Figuig is the end of the railway line into the Sud-Oranais, and, though it and its Grand Hotel du Sahara are of little interest to the tourist, the surrounding environment is as far removed from civilization as one could hope to get and yet find himself fairly comfortable between the four walls of a hotel of imposing proportions.

Figuig is the virtual end of encroaching civilization; eight hundred odd kilometres from the coast straight south into the desert. The railway is not intended to stop at Figuig; and, by this time, it may have reached Colomb-Béchar, a hundred kilometres further on, to which point it was projected when these lines were written. Fifteen miles an hour is the ordinary speed of this toy railway, and the journey takes from twenty-four to thirty hours of uncomfortable and dusty travelling, which costs, however, only a matter of a hundred francs or so, coming and going.

Going east from Figuig, four hundred



Laghouat

kilometres, the only communication being by the caravan trail, is Laghouat, another outpost of civilization on the desert's edge.

Laghouat, like most desert towns, like Touggourt, like Tozeur, like Biskra even, is an oasis. In its markets one may see the traffickings of all the desert types of the Sahara, from the M'zab—the Auvergnats of Algeria—to the wandering nomads of the south,—the tramps of the

desert, not omitting the picturesque *Ouled-Naïls* and the terrible Touaregs, with their still more terrible-looking guns and their heads swathed in black veils.



Hotel at Figuig

At Laghouat and Figuig one gets the truest perspective of the life of the desert that one can have short of Oued-Souf in the Sud-Constantinois. Biskra is in the class of "exploited tourist points," whilst these desert towns are practically inaccessible to all but the hardiest of travellers, —the real genuine travel-lover, not those who are averse to riding in creaky diligences with dusky Arabs for companions, or on mule, donkey, or camel back, for all these means of locomotion come into the desert itinerary.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MITIDJA AND THE SAHEL

THE whole region just west of Algiers is very properly accounted the garden of North Africa. Wheat, the vine, the orange, and all the range of *primeurs* which go to grace the *tables d'hôte* at Paris are grown here to the profit of all and sundry, native and colonist alike, who possess a garden plot of virgin soil.

Boufarik, in the midst of the great plain of the Mitidja, is

a garden city if there ever was one. It is beautifully and geometrically laid out, like Philadelphia, though it doesn't resemble the Quaker City in the least; it is more lively.

The great day at Boufarik is the market day, when a great cattle and sheep market is held (every Monday week). To-day this great market is a survival of one which has been held for ages.

The coming of the French made for the increased prosperity of Boufarik, and its former reputation of being a pest-hole has been entirely overridden by a series of civic improvements which not only resulted in cleaning up the town but made it really beautiful as well.



Market, Boufarik

The Monday market at Boufarik is one of the things to come out from Algiers to see. For once put carriage or automobile behind and travel out by train or diligence, and mingle with the people and see what the real native life of Algeria is like, so far as it can be seen, uncontaminated by foreign influence. Better yet, go out the night before and sleep at the Hotel Benoit. It is unlovely enough as an inn,

but the dishes served at dinner and breakfast are very good; reminiscent of North Africa, but bountiful and excellent. There is nothing offensive or unclean about the hotel, if it is crude; but the colour one gathers on the palette of his memory is very local.

From the afternoon of Sunday, on all the roads leading into Boufarik, from Cherchell and the Sahel, from Miliana, from Blida and Algiers, throng the thousands that will make up the personnel of to-morrow's market. They come on camel-back, on horses, mules, and donkeys, on foot, by diligence, and by rail, herded in flat unroofed cars like cattle. Some are the pure Arab type of the sandy dunes and plains of the waste Sahara, others Berber-Kabyles, and others Jews, Maltese, Spaniards, French, Italians and—tell it not in Gath—Germans. The contrast of the types is as great as the contrast between their modes of conveyance, the contrast between the plodding little donkeys and the great, tall, lumpy camels. The comings and goings of the great native market of Boufarik are a perpetual migration, and there is nothing the Arab likes more than to participate in such an affair. It is his great passion and diversion, and the fact that he stands to gain a little money is not so much an object with him as to kill a little time.

From daybreak, the vast quadrangle on the Route de Blida, outside Boufarik's rectangular fortifications, is given over to tents, shops, and booths. Here and there is a corral of donkeys or mules, or a pen full of sheep. Braying donkeys and bleating sheep are everywhere. The great avenues of plane-trees form a grove, and wherever they cross some more powerful or wily trader has squatted on the ground, to the discomfort of his less fortunate competitor, who, perforce, has to content himself with the shady side of a camel. Leading up to this unique market-place is a splendid avenue of orange-trees.

A superb disorder of trumpery brummagem cutlery, stuffs, firearms and pots and pans clutter the ground in

every direction. Water-sellers and milk-sellers are threading everywhere, each loaded down with his *peau de bouc*, and fruit and bread sellers with their wicker baskets. Saddlery, horseshoes, ropes of hemp, jute, and camel hair all mingle in a picturesque chaos. There are even hand sewing-machines, of the little doll-house variety that the native populations of India, Japan, Patagonia affect as their sole intercourse with modernity.

A few women mingle among the groups, but mostly the crowd is made up of men. Rarely are these market women beautiful except in a savage way. They possess most of the male characteristics of manner, and but few of the wiles and little of the coquettishness of woman. Their visages are tanned to copper colour and sowed with ridges and folds. Many indeed are out and out negresses.

Here beside a stall sits a Soudan negress of fat, flabby visage and large round eyes, as amiable as some greasy animal in captivity—and about as intelligent. She is only a watcher or caretaker; the real owner of the stall, with its melons, its skins, and its baskets, is over yonder in a Moorish café playing dominoes.

From her head and shoulders hang great chains of silver, and in the lobes of her ears are pendants which may be gold or not. She is a barbaric savage, splendid in her savagery and indifferent, apparently, to everything and everybody. But she is part of the setting nevertheless, and she is good to see.

The coast plain west of Algiers, the Sahel properly called, is in strong contrast with the cultivated plain of the Mitidja. The whole journey from Algiers out to Cherchell and back, via Miliana, Blida, and Boufarik, gives one as good an idea of the ancient and modern civilization of North Africa as one could possibly have.

Blida sits calmly in its fertile plain at the foot of the imposing hills which, grouped together, form the

mountains of the Beni-Salah. All round about are orange groves and olive-trees of the very first splendour and production. The *Bois Sacré*, Blida's chief sight, is as picturesque and romantic a woodland as the sentiment of a poet or an artist ever conjured up.

Blida dates from the sixteenth century, when a number of Andalusian families settled here because of the suitability of the region for the cultivation of the orange,—and the commerce has been growing ever since. In the olden times Blida was known as Ouarda, *the little rose*; but afterwards when the Turks and Corsairs held their orgy there, it came to be called Khaaba, *the prostitute*. Since that day it has got back its good name and is one of the liveliest, daintiest, and altogether attractive small cities of Algeria. The native and the French alike know it is *la voluptueuse* or *la parfumée*.

Within Blida's *Bois Sacré* is the venerated marabout of Sidi-Yacoub-ech-Chérif, one of the





Tomb of Sidi-Yacoub

celebrated *kouba* shrines of Islam. No reproduction of it can do its cool, leafy surroundings justice. It is the very ideal of a holy man's retreat and one of the most appealing of shrines to those possessed of the artist's eye. Fragonard or Corot might have spent a lifetime painting the forest interiors of the unspoiled wild-wood of Blida's *Bois Sacré*. The writer is not sure that the author of "Mignon" ever saw or heard of Blida, but his verses were most apropos:

"Connais-tu le pays où fleurit l'oranger,
Le pays des fruits d'or et des roses vermeilles?
. . . . . .
Où rayonne et sourit comme un bienfait de Dieu,
Un éternel printemps sous un ciel toujours bleu.
. . . . . .
C'est là que je voudrais vivre,
Aimer et mourir.... C'est là!..."

In connection with Blida it is worthy of record that the celebrated and venerable *bach-agha* Sid Ben Gannah, of Biskra, Grand-Chef of the Sud-Constantinois, recently underwent a "cure" at the military hospital at Blida. His malady had become a chronic one, and his complete restoration to health through the aid of the capable doctors of the hospital and the mild soft air of Blida has done more than anything else to allay the fanatical superstition of the native against the efficacy of the proper professional treatment of the sick.

The "cure" experienced by their favourite *bach-agha*, the friend of the King of England and bearer of a hundred personal decorations, the "grand old man" of the country, has been heralded wide amongst the natives, from Constantine to Beni-Souf, and Ouardja to El Oued, and has struck the death-knell of the voodooism of the *indigène* "*toubibs*" and quacks.

For many years yet, it is to be hoped, the native may continue to demand the benedictions of Mohammed for their respected chief:

"*Ou sela Allah ala on moulano on ala hebel daro ou ala sahabou ou Salem!*"

A peculiarity of the Mauresques of Blida is that they veil themselves in a most strange manner. Instead of covering their faces, leaving only two glittering black eyes peeping out, they cover all but one eye. A woman who veils after that manner looks suspicious. Beware!

At the Mediterranean extremity of the great plain in which lies Blida—a veritable Garden of Eden, with oranges, figs, grapes, pomegranates and even the apples of Eve—is the little hill-town of Kolea.

Kolea is extraordinary from every point of



A Mauresque of Blida

view. Kolea is a military town; the Zouaves are everywhere, and in their train have come a following of Greeks, Turks, and Maltese. But the little garden-town with its *Jardin des Zouaves*, its two mosques, its turreted fountain and its modern Renaissance Mairie is attractive throughout, albeit it is not the least Oriental.

The Hôtel de France, partly Moorish (the good part), and partly French (the ugly part), is one of those French inns that are indescribably excellent. There is a sure-to-be

Gabrielle who presides at the cook stove and another who serves at table and orders up the *vin rosé* from the cellar when the red or the white wine is too strong (16 degrees) for one's taste. They are wonderfully good, those wines of the Sahel.

It is a remarkably brilliant strip of coast-line extending west from Algiers, and it should be covered in its entirety as far as Cherchell if one would realize the varied beauties and attractions of the Algerian littoral. From Saint-Eugène and Point Pescade, suburbs of Algiers, a fine road extends all the way to Cherchell, a matter of nearly a hundred kilometres, the turquoise Mediterranean always to the right.

At Sidi-Ferruch the French troops first landed when on their conquest of Algeria. At Staouëli-la-Trappe is an abbey where there are a hundred and fifty lay brothers who grow oranges and fine fruits, and while their dull lives away comfortably under the brilliant skies of Africa.

Going still further along the coast, we come to Castiglione, sheltering itself behind a sand-dune, from whence it is but a few kilometres to the "Tombeau de la Chrétienne," as imposing and extraordinary a monument as any of the pyramids of Ghizeh. Architecturally, if not beautiful, it is imposing, and mysterious, in that it is constructed on a most original plan. It is a great mound of superimposed cut stone, entered by a pillared portico, now somewhat ruined. This funeral monument has an appeal for the archæologist and the merely curious alike far beyond many a more conventional monument of its class. The gigantic monument is still supposed to contain many and wonderful treasures, unless they were removed and lost in the forgotten past, for as yet none have been brought to light. Tradition has the following tale to tell of this monumental sepulchre.

One day a Christian woman, fleeing from a rabble of unholy men and women, took refuge in this

commemorative shrine, built by some holy person whose name is forgotten. Her pursuers, coming upon her in her retreat, would have fallen upon her and done her injury, even as she was at her prayers, when suddenly a myriad of flies, mosquitoes, and wasps put the invaders to flight. The frightened woman lived a hermit's life here in her stronghold, and at the end of her span came to die within the impenetrable walls. Ever afterward the cone-like mound was known as the Tombeau de la Chrétienne.

The Arabs call this bizarre tomb Kaber-Roumia. In 1866 it was explored by a band of archæologists, who decided that it was the tomb of the Kings of Mauretania, built by Jubal II in the reign of the great Augustus.

The reader may take his choice of the reasons for the existence of this remarkable monument. One is about as well authenticated as the other. It existed already in 1555, for the records tell that a *Pacha* of Algiers, Salah Raïs, tried, but without success, to destroy the edifice by firing stone cannon-balls at the mass. Nothing happened; the monument was not despoiled of its outlines even. This fact speaks badly either for the old Turkish ammunition or for the skill of the gunners who fired it.

Tipaza, the *chef lieu* of a *commune* with a population of between two or three thousand, is a little coast town and comes next on the itinerary from Algiers to Cherchell.

At Tipaza are still more Roman ruins, covering an area over two thousand metres square. Tipaza was one of the cities of Mauretania where the Christian religion was practised with the utmost fervour. The patron saint of the place was one Salsa, a young girl, who, according to tradition, was put to death at the beginning of the fourth century for having destroyed a pagan idol. Such was religious partisanship of the time. A century later the Vandal king Hunéric, in order to subdue Christianity, caused all those professing it to have their right hands cut off and their tongues cut out. This was the extreme of

cruelty and its effect on Christendom is historic.

The Roman monuments still existing at Tipaza include a theatre, which is in a poor state of preservation. This has been restored in recent years to the extent that commemorative dramatic performances have been held here in the open air, as at Carthage, and at Orange in Provence. The outlines of a great basilica of nine naves, where Sainte Salsa was buried, are still well preserved, and there are also something more than fragments of the baths and water-works, which supplied the drinking water for the surrounding country.

From Tipaza to Cherchell is thirty kilometres by road, which is the only means of reaching the latter place unless one goes from Algiers by steamer along the coast, a voyage not to be recommended for various reasons.

Cherchell possesses the best-preserved outlines of an historic occupation of the past of any of the old Roman settlements of the "Département d'Alger." First as the Phœnician colony of Iol, and later, under Jubal II, as Cesarea, the capital of Mauretania. Cherchell came under the sway of the Roman Empire in the year 40 of the Christian era. The province of Mauretania extended from the Moulouia to the Setif of the present day. In the middle ages Cesarea lay dormant for three centuries; but before this, and again afterwards, its activities were such that the part it played in the history and development of the country was most momentous.

As late as the early years of the past century, the city and port was the refuge of a band of pirates which pillaged throughout all the western waters of the Mediterranean.

The ancient port of Cherchell was the scene of the comings and goings of a vast commerce in Phœnician and Roman times; and the present state of the preservation of the moles and jetties of this old harbour of refuge stamps Cherchell as worthy of comparison with Carthage.

The Roman ruins at Cherchell are stupendous, though fragmentary, and not overnumerous. In the inefficiently installed "Musée" are many of the finest gems of antique sculptures and statuary yet found in Africa. There is a catalogue of these numerous discoveries, compiled by M. Wierzejski, which can be had at the book-shops of Algiers, and which will prove invaluable to those interested in the subject in detail.

The chief Roman monuments remaining in place above ground are the Western Baths and the Central Baths: the Cisterns, the Amphitheatre,—where was martyred Sainte Marciane,—the Circus, and the extensive ramparts sweeping around to the south of the town from one part of the coast-line to another.

Cherchell has a population of nine thousand souls to-day, of which perhaps a third are Europeans. In Roman times it must have had a vast population judging from the area within the ramparts.

The ancient Grande Mosquée of the Arab occupation is now a military hospital. This has had added to it numerous beautifully proportioned columns, with elaborately carved capitals, taken from the ruins of the Central Baths.

South from Cherchell, back from the coast towards the mountains of the "Petit Atlas," fifty kilometres or more by a not very direct road, and connected by a service of public diligences, is Miliana. One will not repent a "stop-over" at this unspoiled little African city. The country reminds one of what the French would call a "*petite Suisse Africaine*." The valleys and plains have a remarkable freshness of atmosphere that one does not associate with a semi-tropical sun.

Miliana itself sits high on the flank of the Zaccar-Gharbi, and is the lineal descendant of the Zucchabar of the Romans. Actually, it was founded in the tenth century. At the time of the French occupation of Algeria Abd-el-Kader

here installed Ali-ben-Embarek (who afterwards became the Agha of the Mitidja under the French). But with the occupation of Médea, in 1840, the stronghold fell and the Arab power was broken for ever in these parts.

Miliana is a walled town to-day, as it was in the days of the Romans and Berbers. On the north is the Porte du Zaccar, and on the south the Porte du Chélif. This snug little hill-town, with only a quarter part of its population European, not counting half as many more Israelites, has a character which places it at once in a class by itself. It has an attractive little commercial hotel, where one eats and drinks the best of the countryside and pays comparatively little for it.

A wide terrace, or esplanade, runs around one side of the town overlooking the walls, and a wide-spread panorama stretches away on the east and west and north and south into infinity, with the imposing mass of the Ouarsenis, called "*l'œil du monde*," as the dominant landscape feature. The terrace is called locally the "*coin des blagueurs*." Why, no one pretends to answer, except that all the world foregathers here to stroll and gossip as they do on the "*cours*" of a Provençal town.

Miliana's mosque is a simple but elegant structure, graceful but not ornate, imposing but not majestic. It is dedicated to Sidi-Ahmed-ben-Youssef, a venerated marabout who lived all his life hereabouts. He had as bitter and satirical a tongue as Dean Swift when speaking of the men and manners of those about him.

Turning eastward again from Miliana towards Algiers, one passes the entrance to the Gorges de Chiffa, the road to Médea, and finally Blida, the centre of the little yellow, thin-skinned orange traffic.

From Blida a classic excursion is to be made to the Gorges de Chiffa, where, at the Ruisseau des Singes, formerly lived a colony of hundreds, perhaps thousands of

monkeys in their wild native state. Nowadays the only monkeys one sees are on the frieze in the *salle-à-manger* of a most excellently appointed little wayside hotel.

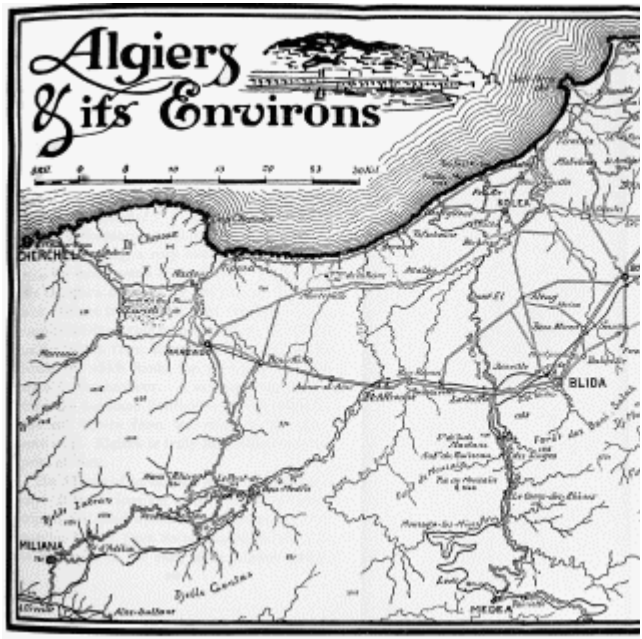


At the
Ruisseau des Singes
B. Mcm '01

Hamman-R'hira, on the road between Miliana and Blida, is an incipient watering-place, where one can get tea and American drinks, and play croquet.

Its mineral springs—much like those of Contrexeville in France—have been famous for centuries, and the old Moorish baths are still used by the Moors and Arabs round about. For the Europeans who, throughout the spring and winter season, throng to the great hotel, now managed by a limited company, there are other baths more luxuriously installed.

Hamman-R'hira is an attractive enough place of itself, and would be more so were it not filled with rheumatics and anæmics. The frequenters of the Moorish baths are more interesting than the European clientèle for the investigator of men and manners.



CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT WHITE CITY—ALGIERS

THE first view of Algiers from the ship, as one enters the port, is a dream of fairyland, "*Alger la Blanche!*" "*El Djesair la molle!*" If it is in the morning, all is white and dazzling; if in the evening, a rosy violet haze is over all, with the background of the "Petit Atlas" and the Djurjura shutting off the littoral from the wide Sahara to the south. At twilight a thousand twinkling lights break out, from the Kasba on the height, from Mustapha, from the terrace boulevard which flanks the port and from the ships in the harbour. A stronger ray flashes from the headland lighthouse at Cap Matifou, and still others from war-ships in the great open gulf. Algiers is truly fairy-like from any point of view.

The Algiers of to-day is a great and populous city. It is the Icosium of the Romans doubled, tripled, and quadrupled. Three towns in juxtaposition stretch from Saint-Eugène on the west to Mustapha on the east, while Algiers proper has for its heart the "Place du Gouvernement" and the "Grande Mosquée."

The Place du Gouvernement is a vast square, a sort of modern forum, flanked on one side by the Mosque of Djema-el-Djedid, the Grande Mosquée, and on the others by shops, cafés, and hotels. From it stretch the four great thoroughfares of the city, Bab-el-Oued, La Marine, La Kasba, and Bab-Azoum. All the animation and the tumult of the city centres here, and the passing throng of Arabs, soldiers, Jews, Mauresques, and the French and foreign elements, forms an ethnological exhibit as varied as it is unusual.

Algiers has a special atmosphere all its own. It lacks those little graces which we identify as thoroughly French, in spite of the fact that the city itself has become so largely Frenchified; and it lacks to a very great extent—from almost every view-point—that Oriental flavour which one finds at Cairo and Tunis. But for all that, Algiers is the most wonderful exotic and conventional blend of things Arab and European on top of earth.

The environs of Algiers are rugged and full of character, opening out here and there into charming distant vistas, and wide panoramas of land and sea and sky. All is large, immense, and yet as finely focussed as a miniature. One must not, however, attempt to take in too great an angle at a single glance, else the effect will be blurred, or perhaps lost entirely.

The impulsive ones, who like the romance of Touraine and the daintiness of valley of the Indre and the Cher, will find little to their liking around Algiers. All is of a ruggedness, if not a savageness, that the more highly developed civilization of the "Midi" has quite wiped out.

Here the ragged eucalyptus takes the place of the poplar, and the *platane* is more common than the aspen or the birch. The palm-trees are everywhere, but just here they are of the cultivated or transplanted variety and generally of the feather-duster species, decorative and pleasing to look upon, but givers neither of dates nor of shade.

Algiers and its life, and that of its immediate environs, whether the imported gaieties of Mustapha or the native fêtes of Bouzarea, and the periodical functions for ever taking place in the city itself, give about as lively an exposition of cosmopolitanism as one may observe anywhere.

The historical monuments of Algiers are not as many as might at first be supposed, for most of its memories of historic times deals with places rather than things; and, indeed, this is true of the whole surrounding country, from Tizi-Ouzou in Kabylie to Cherchell and Tipaza in the Sahel, to the west.

The chief of Algiers' architectural charms—aside from that varied collection of crazy walls and crooked streets which make up the Arab town—are the Archbishop's Palace,—a fine old Arab house of a former Dey of Algiers; the Peñon and the Amirauté, or what is left of it, on the mole below the Palais Consulaire; its three principal mosques; the cathedral,—the mosque of other days transformed; the Palais d'Eté of the Governor-General, in part dating from the seventeenth century, and the Kasba fortress, high up above the new and old town.

These are all guide-books sights, and the only comments herewith are a few hazarded personal opinions.

High above, up through the streets of stairs, scarce the width of two people side by side, and still up by whitewashed walls, great iron-studded doors and grilled windows, sits the Kasba, the great fortress defence of Algiers since the days when Turkish rule gave it the most

unenviable reputation in all the world. There is a continual passing and repassing of all Algiers' population, apparently, from the lower town to the height above, Europeans, Arabs, Moors and Jews. The scene is ever changing and kaleidoscopic. A white wraith toddles along before one, and, as you draw near, resolves into a swaddled Mauresque who, half afraid, giggles at you through the opening of her veil and suddenly disappears through some dim-lighted doorway, her place only to be taken by another form as shapeless and mysterious.

This is the Arab town day or night; and but for the steep slope one might readily lose himself in the maze of streets and alleys. As it is all one has to do is to keep moving, not minding the gigglings and gibings of the natives. One enters the *ville Arabe* by any one of a hundred streets or alleys. At its outmost height you are at the Kasba; when you reach the bottom you are in the European town. To the right or left you reach a sort of encircling boulevard which in turn brings you to the same objectives. It is not so difficult as it looks, and one need fear nothing, night or day, until he reaches the European town and civilization, where thievery and murderings are nightly occurrences.

Here in the old Arab town one is in another world; here are the *maisons à terrasse*, the mosques, the narrow *ruelles* with their overhung porches and only occasional glimpses of the starry sky overhead. Verily it is as if one had left the electric-lighted "Place," the *cafés chantants*, the tramway, and the shipping behind in another world, though in reality a hundred steps, practically, in any direction will bring them all within sight and sound and smell again.

After all, the quaint streets of the hillside town are Algiers' chief sights, after the magnificent panorama of the bay and that wonderful first view as seen from the ship as one enters the port.

Algiers' native quarter has been somewhat spoiled by the cutting through of new streets, and the demolishing and

refurbishing of old buildings; but, nevertheless, there are little corners and stretches here and there where the daily life of the native men and women goes on to-day as it did when they lived under Turkish rule. Here are the shopkeepers of all ranks: a butcher dozing behind his *moucharabia*, looking like the portraits of Abd-el-Kader; a date-seller, the image of the Khedive of Egypt; a baker with a Jewish cast of figure; and next door a *café-maure* with all the leisure population of the neighbourhood stretched out on the *nattes* and benches,





A Cemetery Gate

smoking and talking and drinking. It is not fairyland, nor anything like it; it is not even Oriental; but it is strange to Anglo-Saxon, or even European, eyes that such things should be when we ourselves are wallowing in an over-abundance of labour-saving, comfort-giving luxuries which the Arab has never dreamed of. We chase our flies away with an electric fan, whilst he idly waves a *chasse-mouches* of antique pattern, and does the thing quite as

effectively, and with very little more effort.

They are very grave, magnificently tranquil, these turbaned Turks and Jews and Arabs, sitting majestic and silent before some café door, clad in all the rainbow colours of civilization and savagery. Their peace of mind is something we might all acquire with advantage, instead of strenuously "going the pace" and trying to keep up with, or a little ahead of, the next.

In spite of its strangeness, Algiers is not at all Oriental. The Arabs of Algiers themselves lack almost totally the aspect of Orientalism. The Turk and Jew have made the North African Arab what he is, and his Orientalism is simply the Orientalism of the East blended and browned with the subtropical rays of the African sun. It is undeniably picturesque and exotic, but it is not the pure Eastern or Byzantine variety which we at first think it. To realize this to the full, one has only to make the comparison between Algiers and Cairo and Tunis.

It is the cosmopolitan blend of the new and the old, of the savage with the civilized, that makes cosmopolitan Algiers what it is. This mixture of many foreign elements of men and manners is greatly to be remarked, and nowhere more than in Algiers' cafés, where French, English, Americans, and Arabs meet in equality over their *café-cognac*, though the Arab omits the cognac. The cosmopolitanism of Marseilles is lively and varied, that of Port Saïd ragged and picturesque, but that of Algiers is brilliantly complicated.

Algiers is the best kept, most highly improved, and, by far, the most progressive city on the shores of the great Mediterranean Lake, and this in spite of its contrast of the old and new civilizations. San Francisco could take a lesson from Algiers in many things civic, and the street-cleaners of London and Paris are notably behind their brothers of this African metropolis.

The *marchand de cacaoettes* is the king of Algiers' Place du Gouvernement; or, if he isn't, the bootblack with his "*Cire, m'ssieu!*" holds the title. Anyway, the peanut-seller is the aristocrat. He sits in the sun with a white or green umbrella over his head, and is content if he sells fifty centimes worth of peanuts a day. His possible purchasers are many, but his clients are few, and at a sou for a fair-sized bag full, he doesn't gather a fortune very quickly. Still he is content, and that's the main thing. The bootblack is more difficult to satisfy. He will want to give your shoes a "*glace de Paris*," even if another of his compatriots has just given them a first coating of the same thing. The bootblacks of Algiers are obstinate, importunate, and exasperating.

From a document of 1621 one learns that Algiers had a population of 100,000 in 1553, a half a century later 150,000, and in 1621 200,000. Then came the decadence; and, at the coming of the French in 1832, Algiers was but a city of 34,000, Moors, Turks, Jews, Negroes, and Arabs all counted.

They were divided as follows:

Mussulmans	17,858
Negroes	1,380
Jews	5,758
Floating population	9,888
	34,884

By 1847 a European population had crowded in which brought the figures up to 103,610 and gave Algiers a rank of fifth among French cities.

Algiers' busy port is picturesque and lively in every aspect, with the hourly comings and goings of great steamships from all the length and breadth of the Mediterranean, and from the seven seas as well. Over all is the great boundless blue of a subtropical, cloudless sky;

beneath the restless lapping of the waves of the still bluer Mediterranean; and everywhere the indescribable odour of *bitume*, of sea salt, and of oranges. The background is the dazzling walls of the arcaded terraces of the town, and the still higher turrets and towers of a modern and ancient civilization. Still farther away are the rolling, olive-clad hills and mountains of the Sahel. Sunrise or sunset on Algiers' port are alike beautiful; one should miss neither.

The best-remembered historical and romantic figures of Algiers are Pedro Navarro, who built the Peñon; the brothers Barberousse, Corsairs from the Dardanelles, whom the Algerians called in to help them fight their battles against Christianity; and Cervantes, the author of "Don Quixote," who was imprisoned here, and who left an imperishable account of the city of his captivity, ever useful to later historians.

Charles V and Louis XIV both had a go at Algiers, but it fell not to their attack; and it was only with later times, incident upon an insult offered the French ambassador by Hussein Dey, the Turkish ruler of the El-Djezair of the ancients, that Algiers first capitulated to outside attack.

Old Algiers was not impregnable, perhaps, but such weapons of warfare as were used against the Turks were inefficient against its thick walls, its outposts, and its fortified gates.

The historic Peñon underwent many a mediæval siege, but was finally captured from its Spanish defender, De Vegas, and his little band of twenty-five survivors, who were summarily put to death. Khair Ed Din pulled down, in part, the fortifications and joined the remainder by a jetty to the mainland, the same break-water which to-day shelters the port on the north. A fragment of one of the original signal towers was built up into the present lighthouse, and a system of defences, the most formidable on the North African coast, was begun. The fortifications of Algiers were barriers which separated the growing

civilization of Europe from the barbarian nether world, and they fell only with the coming of the French in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Such is the story of the entering wedge of progressive civilization in Algeria.

Algiers' veiled women are one of the city's chief and most curious sights for the stranger within her walls. On Friday, the *jour des morts* of the Arab women, they go to the cemetery to weep or to make gay, according as the mood is on. For the recluse Arab women it is more apt to be a fête-day than a day of sorrow. They dress in their finest, their newest, and their cleanest, and load themselves down with jangling jewelry to the limit of their possessions. By twos and threes, seldom alone, they go to make their devotions at the *Kouba* of Didi-Mohammed Abd-er-Rahman Bou Kobrin.

Poor prisoner women; six days a week they do not put foot outside their doors; and on the seventh they take a day's outing *in the cemetery*. "*Pas gai!*" says the Frenchwoman, and no wonder.

When the sun commences to lower, they quit the cemetery of Bou-Kobrin and file in couples and trios and quartettes back to their homes in the narrow shut-in streets which huddle about the grim walls of the hilltop Kasba. They toddle and crawl and almost creep, as if they feared entering their homes again; they have none of that proud, elastic, jaunty step of the Kabyle women or of the Bedouins of the "Great Tents;" they are only poor unfortunate "Arab women of the walls."

One after another these white-veiled pyramids of femininity disappear, burrowing down through some low-hung doorway, until finally their weekly outing is at an end and they are all encloistered until another seventh day rolls around.

That these Mauresque women of Algiers are beautiful there is no doubt, but their beauty is of the qualified kind.

The chief attribute to the beauty of the Mauresque woman is *kohl* or *kohol* or *koheul*, a marvellous preparation of sulphur, of antimony of copper and of alum—and perhaps other things too numerous to mention, all of which is made into a paste and dotted about all over the face as beauty-spots. Sometimes, too, they kalsomine the face with an enamel, like that on a mediæval vase. Those of the social whirl elsewhere use a similar concoction under another name which is sold by high-class chemists and perfumers, but they don't let you know what it is made of, or at any rate, don't take you into their confidence—neither the chemists nor the women.

When a Mauresque dyes herself to the eyes with *kohl*, and dips her finger-tips in henna until they are juicy red, then she thinks she is about as ravishing as she can be in the eyes of God, her lover, and herself. She has to do this, she thinks, to keep her favour with him, because others might perchance put it on a little thicker and so displace her charms, and his affection.

It is a belief among Mussulman women that Mahomet prescribed the usage of *kohl*, but this idea is probably born of the desire. Certainly no inspiration of God, nor the words of his prophet, ever suggested such a thing.

CHAPTER XVI

ALGIERS AND BEYOND

To get into the interior back of Algiers, you make your start from Maison Carrée. Here one gets his first glimpse of the real countryside of Algeria. These visions of the Arab life of olden times are quite the most interesting features of the country. Civilization has crept in and rubbed shoulders very hard here and there; but still the Arab trader, workman, and shopkeeper conducts his affairs

much as he did before he carried a dollar watch and lighted his cigarettes with safety matches.

The kaleidoscopic life of the market at Maison Carrée is one of the sights of suburban Algiers. Here on a vast, dusty down, packed everywhere with donkeys, mules and blooded Arabians, and there in a great enclosure containing three or five thousand sheep, is carried on as lively a bit of trading as one will observe anywhere outside a Norman horse-fair or a land sale on some newly opened reservation in the Far West.

Horses, donkeys, mules, and sheep cry out in all the varied accents of their groans and bleatings, the sheep and their lambs, lying with their four feet tied together, complaining the loudest. Hundreds of Arabs, Kabyles, Turks, Jews, and Europeans bustle and rustle about in picturesque disorder, doing nothing apparently, but vociferating and grimacing. All sorts of footwear and head-gear are here, turbans, fezes, *haiks*, sandals, sabots, and *espadrilles*. Gay broidered vestments and dirty rent burnouses jostle each other at every step.

Mutton is up or down to-day, a sheep may sell for eight francs or it may sell for twenty, and the buyer or seller is glad or sorry, he laughs, or he weeps,—but he smokes and drinks coffee at all times nevertheless.

In a snug corner are corralled some Arab steers and cows, a rare sight even in the markets of Algiers. One eats mutton all the time and everywhere, but seldom beef. The butchers of Algiers corner it for the *milords* and millionaires of the Mustapha hotel, who demand "underdone" beefsteaks and "blood-running" roasts of beef for breakfast, dinner, and supper.

An Arabian horse, so-called, but not a blooded beast, sells here for from eighty to two hundred francs. High-priced stock is rare here, hence there is little horse-trading of the swindling variety, and no horse thieving. The Arab

maquignons, dressed in half European and half desert fashion, bowler hats and a burnous, sandals and bright blue socks with red clocks on them, are, however, more insistent, if possible, than their brothers of Brittany.

"You want to buy a horse, *un chiv'l*?" says a greasy-looking blackamoor. "*Moi, z'en connaiz-un, 130 francs, mais z'i peux ti l'avoir pour 95.*" You don't want to buy a horse, of course, but you ask its age. "*Moi, s'i te sure, neuf ou dix ans peut-être—douze ans, mais ze, ze le connais, il trotte comme la gazelle.*" It's all very vague, including the French, and you get away as soon as you can, glad at any rate that you have lost neither time nor money.

All the trading of the Arab market is, as the French say, pushed to the limit. Merchandizing describes the process, and describes it well. A hundred sous, a *pièce* only, refused or offered, will make or break a bargain almost on the eve of being concluded.

An Arab trader in—well, everything—has just sold half a ton of coal to a farmer living a dozen kilometres out in the country. The farmer bought it "delivered," and the Arab coal merchant of the moment bargains with a Camel Sheik for fifty sous to deliver the sooty charge by means of three camels. Three camels, twenty-four kilometres (a day's journey out and back), and a driver costs fifty sous, two francs and a half, a half a dollar. It's a better bargain than you could make, and you marvel at it.

A troop of little donkeys comes trotting up the hillside to the market, loaded with grain, dates, peanuts, and some skinny fowls and ducks. They have "dog-trotted" in from Rovigo, thirty kilometres distant, and they will trot back again as lively after breakfast, their owner beating them over the flanks all the way. Poor, patient, clever little beasts, docile, but not willing! Yes, not willing; a donkey is never willing, whatever land he may live in.

Booths and tents line the sides of the great square, filled

with the gimcrack novelties of England, France, Germany, and America,—and the more exotic folderols of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Jews sell calico, and Turks and Greeks sell fraudulent gold and silver jewelry and coral beads made of glass melted in a crucible. Merchandise of all sorts and of all values is spread on the bare ground. A pair of boxing gloves, an automobile horn, a sword with a broken blade, and all kinds of trumpery rubbish cast off from another world are here; and before night somebody will be found to buy even the boxing-gloves.

Europeans, too, are stall-holders in this great rag-fair. Spaniards and Maltese are in the greatest proportions, and the only Frenchmen one sees are the strolling gendarmes poking about everywhere.

Noon comes, and everybody with a soul above trade repairs to a restaurant of the middle class near by, a great marble hall fitted with marble top tables. Here every one lunches with a great deal of gesticulation and clamour. It is very primitive, this Algerian quick-lunch, but it is cleanly and the food is good. For twenty-five sous you may have a *bouillabaisse*, a dish of *petits pois*, two *œufs à la coque*, goat's-milk cheese, some biscuits and fruit for dessert, a half-bottle of wine and *café et kirsch*. Not so bad, is it?

"The better one knows Algeria," says the brigadier of gendarmes, or the lieutenant in some army bivouac, "the less one knows the Arab." The point of view is traditional. The serenity and taciturn manner of the Arab is only to be likened to that of the Celestial Wong Hop or Ah Sin. What the Arab thinks about, and what he is likely to do next no one knows, or can even conjecture with any degree of certainty. All one can do is to jump at conclusions and see what happens—to himself or the Arab.

When the Duc d'Aumale conquered Biskra, the Arabs promptly retook it, practically, if not officially, and gave themselves up to such abandoned orgies that not even the military authorities could make them tractable. The

authorities at Paris were at their wits' ends how to win the hearts of the Arabs, and conquer them morally as well as physically. Louis-Philippe made a shrewd guess and sent Robert Houdin, the prestidigitateur, down into the desert. From that time on the Arab of Algeria has been the tractable servant of the French.

Straight south from Maison Carrée, across the Mitidja, eighteen kilometres more or less, lies Arba, the beginning of the real open country. A steam-tram goes on ten kilometres farther, to Rovigo. At Arba, however, the "Route Nationale" to the desert's edge branches off via Aumale to Bou-Saada and beyond, where the real desert opens out into the infinite mirage.

The nearest the camel caravans of the desert ever get to Algiers is at this little market town of Arba. Here on a market day (Wednesday) may be seen a few stray, mangy specimens of the type loaded with grapes, figs, or dates, though usually the *bourriquet*, or donkey, is the beast of burden. The Arab never carries his burdens himself, as do other peasants. It is beneath his dignity; for no matter how ragged or rusty he is, his burnous is sacred from all wear and tear possible to be avoided.

Except for its great market back of its modern ugly mosque, there is not much to see in Arba. Here is even a more heterogeneous native riffraff than one sees at Maison Carrée, Blida, or Boufarik. And indeed it is all "native," for the Turks and Jews of the coast towns are absent. The trading is all done in produce. And if the native merchant, in his little shop or stall where he sells foreign-made clothes and gimcracks, cannot sell for cash, he is willing to barter for a sack of grain or a few sheep or some goat skins. The Jew trader will not bother with this kind of traffic. He wants to deal for cash, either as buyer or seller, he doesn't care which.

Here a native shoemaker, or rather maker of *babouches*, sits beneath a rude shelter and fashions fat, tubby slippers

out of dingy skins and sole leather with the fur left on. On another side is a sweetmeat seller, a baker of honey cakes, and a vegetable dealer, and even a butcher, who tries to lead his Mussulman brother astray and get him to become a carnivorous animal like us Christians. He doesn't succeed very well, because the Arab eats very little meat.

In a tent, beneath a great palm, sits the physician and dentist of the tribe, with all his paraphernalia of philters and potions and tooth-pulling appliances. Like the rest of us, the Arab suffers from toothache sometimes; and he wastes no time but goes and "has it out" at the first opportunity. The procedure of the Arab tooth-puller is no more barbaric than our own, and the possessor of the refractory molar has an equally hard time. All these things and more one sees at Arba's weekly market. It is all very strange and amusing.

Aumale is nearly a hundred kilometres beyond Arba, with nothing between except occasional settlements of a few score of Europeans and a few hundreds of Arabs. Communication with Algiers from Aumale is by a crazy, rocking seven-horse diligence which covers the ground, by night as often as by day, in nine or ten hours, at a gait of six or seven miles an hour, and at a cost of as many francs.

Aumale is nothing but the administrative centre of a *commune* blessed with two good enough inns and a long, straight main street running from end to end. As the Auzia of the Romans, it was formerly occupied by a strong garrison. The Turks in turn built a fortress on the same site, and the French occupied it as a military post in 1846, giving it a second baptism in the name of the Duc d'Aumale, the son of Louis-Philippe.

From Aumale on to Bou-Saada is another hundred and twenty-four kilometres over a new-made "Route Nationale." It is a good enough road for a diligence, which makes the journey in sixteen or eighteen hours, including stops. There is no accommodation *en route* save that

furnished by the government *bordjs*, the *caravanserai* and the *café-maures*.

Here, at last, one is launched into the desert itself. The journey is one of strange, impressive novelty, though nothing very venturesome. In case of a prolonged breakdown, there is nothing to do but to drink the water of the *redir* (a sort of a natural pool reservoir hollowed out of the rock), and be thankful indeed if your curled-up Arab travelling companion will share his crust with you. To him white bread, if only soaked in water, is a great luxury; to you it will seem pretty slim; but then we are overfed as a rule and an Arab dietary for a time will probably prove beneficial. The life of the nomad Arab is a very full one, but it is not a very active nor luxurious one.

Through wonderful ocean-like mirages and clouds of dust whirled up by the sirocco, a veritable "*tourbillon de poussière*," as Madame de Sévigné would have called it, we rolled off the last kilometres of our tiresome journey, just as the last rays of the blood-red sun were paling before the coming night. We arrived at Bou-Saada's Hotel Bailly just as the last remnants of the *table d'hôte* were being cleared away, which, in this little border town, half civilized and half savage, means thrown into the streets to furnish food for chickens. How the inhabitant of the Algerian small town ever separates his own fowls from those of his neighbours is a great question, since they all run loose in the common feeding-ground of the open street.

Bou-Saada is even of less importance than Aumale to the average person. But for the artist it is a paradise. It is not Tlemcen, it has no grand mosques; it is not Tunis, it has no great *souks* and bazaars; but it is quaintly native in every crooked street huddled around the military post and the hotels. The life of



the leather and silver workers, and of the butcher, the baker and the seller of blankets and foodstuffs is, as yet, unspoiled and uncontaminated with anything more worldly than oil-lamps. The conducted tourist has not yet reached Bou-Saada, and consequently the native life of the place is

all the more real.

Here is an account of a café acquaintance made at Bou-Saada. Zorah-ben-Mohammed was a pretty girl, according to the standards of her people, with a laugh like an *houri*. She confessed to eighteen years, and it is probable that she owned no more. The rice powder and the *maquillage* were thick on her cheek, whilst the rest of her face was frankly ochre. For all that she was a pretty girl and came perilously near convincing us of it, though hers was a beauty far removed from our own preconceived standards.

Great black eyes and a massive *coiffe* of raven-black hair topped off her charms. Below she was clad in a corsage of gold-embroidered velvet and an ample silk *pantalon* that might indeed have been a skirt, so large and thick were its folds. Bijoux she had galore. They may have been of gold and silver and precious stones, or they may not; but they were precious to her and added not a little to her graces. Bracelets bound her wrists and her ankles, and her finger-tips were dyed red with henna.

Zora or Zorah Fatma, or in Arab, Fetouma, are the girlish names which most please their bearer, and our friend Zorah was a queen in her class. Zorah served the coffee in the little Moorish café in Bou-Saada's market-place, into which we had tumbled to escape a sudden sandstorm blown in from the desert. Her powers of conversation were not great; she did not know many French words and we still fewer Arab ones, so our respective vocabularies were soon exhausted. We admired her and made remarks upon her,—which was what she wanted, and, though the charge for the coffee was only two sous a cup, she was artful enough to worm a *pourboire* of fifty centimes apiece out of us for the privilege of being served by her.

As we left, Zorah, with her professional little laugh on her lips, cried out, "*redoua, redoua!*" (to-morrow, to-morrow!) "Well—perhaps!" we answered. "*Peut-être que*

oui! Peut-être que non!"

A visit to the marabout at El Hamel, fifteen kilometres from Bou-Saada, is one of the things to do. We descended upon him in his hermit shrine, and found him seated on a great carpet of brilliant colouring and reclining on an enormous cushion of embroidered silk,—not the kind the Tunisian workers try to sell steamship-cruising tourists during their day on shore, but the real gold-embroidered, silky stuff, such, as dressed the characters of the Arabian nights.

Hung about the marabout's neck was his chaplet of little ebony beads, and behind his head hung an embroidered silken square, its gold olive branches and fruit glittering with sun's rays like an aureole.

Grouped about the marabout in a squatting semicircle and listening to his holy words were a half-dozen or more faithful Mussulmans. One of them was very old, with a visage ridged like a melon rind, and a fringe of beard that once was probably black, but was now a scant gray collaret. His face was the colour of brown earth, but he was manifestly a pure blooded Arab; there was not even the telltale pearly-blue tint in the eyes which always marks the half-bred Berber-Arab type. Another, rolled snug in an old burnous, was by his side, his eyes quite closed and his head and body rocking as though he was asleep. He probably was. A third was younger, of perhaps three and thirty, but he was quite as devout as his elders, though he was more wide-awake, and looked curiously and interestedly upon us as we stood in the doorway of the little white temple of a sanctuary awaiting the time when the marabout should be free of his religious duties.

Our visit was appreciated. We had brought the holy man a few simple gifts of chocolate, matches, and a couple of candles, and donated twenty copper sous to his future support. After the adieux of convention were exchanged, we jogged our little donkeys back to the town by a short

cut through the bed of the Oued Bou-Saada.

CHAPTER XVII

KABYLIE AND THE KABYLES

KABYLIE is a wild, strange land known to few and peopled by many, though indeed the population is mostly native. Colonization has not made great inroads into the mountains of Grande and Petite Kabylie. And though the tract is contiguous to Algiers itself, few stranger tourists know it as anything more than a name. Still less do they know its savage and undeveloped beauties.

The Algerian government has pushed a great "Route Nationale" through the heart of the mountains, and Tizi-Ouzou and Fort National have grown up into more or less important centres of European civilization; but in the main the aspect is as much Kabyle to-day as it was when this pure Berber race—the purest left in North Africa—first began to make its influence felt among the many tribes of the Mediterranean coast and the Sahara.

The mountain villages of Kabylie are not mere nests of huddled shacks, nor groups of tents, nor "lean-tos," nor mud huts. They are of well-built houses, with sloping or flat stone roofs, and look like the little hamlets of the Pyrenees or the Cevennes in France, where the rude winters have taught men to build after a certain fashion in order to live comfortably. The Kabyles early learned the same way of doing things; for, in spite of the fact that the brilliant African sun sometimes burns, even in midwinter, with a fervour unknown elsewhere, the mountain-tops are snow-covered for three or four months of the year; and the roads over which the daily antediluvian mail-coach and diligence pass—with occasionally an intrepid automobilist—are often impassable for a week.

The railway does not penetrate this mountain fastness beyond Tizi-Ouzou, and though it skirts the sunny southern side of the woods, the snows of winter blocked it last year for forty-eight hours. And this in Africa! If the exterior of the Kabyle mountain villages do resemble those of other lands, their interiors have a style of furnishing and decoration all their own. Purely Kabyle, it is wonderfully decorative, simple, and effective. It is the artist's ideal interior, as the illustration herewith shows. The decorative scheme is its all in all. There is little furniture, almost no *bibelots*, if one omits goat-skin rugs, blankets, and the homely pottery and copper domestic utensils.

From Fort National the route leads down to meet the trunk line at Beni-Mançour, and *en route* takes on even a wilder aspect than that by which one ascended from the seaboard plain around Algiers. The journey can be made readily in a day by hired carriage, or, better yet, in a few hours by automobile.

From either side extend mountain valleys and ravines, each of them giving place to a road of sorts, practicable to the mountain mule, but to nothing else, save a human being on foot. If one would do some real exploring, let him spend ten days in Kabylie. He will think he is in the "Forbidden Land" of Tibet so far as intercourse with the outside world is concerned.

Footprints of the naked feet of men and women, and of the cloven hoofs of animals, will be the only signs of life visible for hours at a time. Yet in spite of the fact that the land is so wild and dreary, it is the most thickly populated region of Northern Africa. The braying of donkeys, the voices of women, the cries of children, and the gutturals of the men give, if not a melody, at least a quaint and charming sound as one draws up on some hilltop Kabyle village. A flock of sheep bars the way, but an old woman with a stick pounds them hither and thither with head-cracking blows, and at last you arrive before the open door

of a native café and bargain with a soft-faced brown Kabyle youth for a *bourriquet* to take you twenty kilometres farther on, where you may find a lodging for the night.

You must bargain, wherever you are, and for whatever you want, in Africa; even with the Kabyle. Once your bargain made,—three francs for a little donkey for a day, or five, including his owner for a guide,—you need have no fear. The Kabyle will hold to it like grim death. The Kabyle is a savage if you like, but his virtues are many.

The Kabyle villages abound in dogs. They may not be vicious dogs, but you don't know whether they are or not, and accordingly are wary. The Kabyle dogs have all shades of pitch and gamut in their voices. There are tenors, baritones, and even sopranos, and an occasional bass. If a solitary example is met with on a by-road he is readily made to retreat with a shower of stones; but as he is liable to catch up with you later, accompanied by reinforcements, as you draw up on the village, you must ever be on the *qui vive*. No one ever heard of anybody but a sheep-stealer having been bitten by a Kabyle dog (which, by the way, looks like any other mongrel cur): but discretion here, as in many other tight corners, is the chief part of valour. "*De l'audace, encore de l'audace et toujours de l'audace!*" is a stimulating French slogan, but one is in doubt about putting it into practice with a grinning, long-fanged mongrel before him on a lone mountain road.

The Kabyles are one division of that great race of Berbers, the most ancient dwellers on African soil. They have kept the type comparatively pure by inhabiting this restricted area closely bordering upon the Atlas Mountains a dozen or twenty leagues from the sea. "They are," says M. Jules Duval, "the principal types of the Berber race, and those who have best conserved their ancestral characteristics, and are perhaps the Numidians of old." That is a pedigree worth owning up to. Brave and

industrious, the Kabyles can fight as well as bargain, and they value patriotism and ancestral tradition above everything else.

Of all the Mussulman races, the Kabyles treat their women with the greatest deference, and even allow them to frequent public fêtes, faces uncovered, and to dance with the men, *yatagan* or gun in hand.

The Kabyle is successful in whatever occupation he follows, more so than any of his Mussulman brothers. As herders, farmers, armourers, blacksmiths, and masons,—at everything in fact that requires an aptitude and deftness of hand,—they excel.

When in straits the Kabyle will sell all his worldly goods, save his gun, without the slightest trace of emotion. Perhaps this is because his gun is the only thing on which he pays taxes and accordingly he knows its value.

It is said of the Kabyles that they eat their daughters. "*Le père mange sa fille.*" This comes from the custom which some of the Kabyle tribes have of bartering off the hand of their daughter to the most willing suitor at a price ranging from two hundred to a thousand francs. There's nothing very wrong about this, seemingly, not according to African standards.

The Kabyle and his relatives in their little square house live the life of a truly happy family. He and his relatives and his live stock—except his camels, the odour from which is a little too strong for even Kabyle nostrils—all living together under the same roof. There is no more squalor about it, however, than one may see in the human and pig-inhabited huts of Connemara.

The Kabyle comes of a comparatively wealthy class, but his house furnishings are very meagre. Besides the animals before mentioned, he possesses only his *batterie de cuisine*, some great oil jars and earthenware pots for the storing away of olives, butter and honey. He also has a

storehouse for grain, where he keeps his wheat or maize flour, which he or the members of his family have themselves ground between the traditional upper and nether millstones, which in this case are portable ones.

Such is a brief inventory of the dwellings and the round of life of the Kabyles of the mountain villages, founded by their ancestors hundreds and perhaps thousands of years ago. Some of their race have got the wandering foot, and live in the pastoral black and brown striped tent like the real nomads; but these are comparatively few in number. The real, Simon-pure Kabyle is a house-dweller.

The Kabyle mountain settlements are often mere hamlets called *dehera*, and in these the village schoolmaster, besides having his own duties, also performs the functions of priest of the temple. He is literally the *imam* of the mosque, and carries out according to his faith the monotonous repetition of the words of the Koran when not otherwise engaged. Every Kabyle village has its temples of knowledge and of religion, just as sure as it has a headsman or Sheik. The mosque is naturally the most notable edifice of the settlement; but is seldom splendid or pretentious, and often it serves as a hostelry as well as a place of worship. But only for the faithful—not for dogs of infidels.

Though the Kabyles in general are not tent-dwellers, but live in houses of stone or brick construction, these edifices exhibit no particular architectural characteristics; but are as much like the dwellings of the Pueblos as they are like those of the Thibetans. To all intents and purposes the towns and settlements and, in a measure, all Kabyle houses, are fortresses. This is an effect which is heightened by the almost universal employment of substitutes for the crenelated battlement and *meurtrières* or loopholes, cut in the walls in place of windows, so distinctive of European feudal architecture.

Just by way of contrast to the virtues of the Kabyles, it is

bound to be recorded that they are the dirtiest lot that one finds in Africa; and inasmuch as this is contrary to the tenets of the Mussulman religion it is the more to be remarked. Up to within a few years, according to the head of a French mission which surveyed the Kabyle country, there was but one public bath establishment to be found in all their native towns and villages. The result is that hereditary affections are transmitted from generation to generation, and were it not for the efficacy of the open-air cure the Kabyles would be a considerably less long-lived race than they are.

The Kabyles live well at all events, and their couscous is renowned throughout all Algeria. Their preserved figs and ripe and unripe olives are of the first quality and bring the highest prices in the markets of Algiers, Bougie or Beni-Mançour. The Kabyle is no longer a savage, though he does stick closely to many traditions, and eats his couscous out of a great dish of beechwood fashioned by hand from a cross-section cut from a tree-trunk. The mere fact that he eats it from a plate at all, instead of from a pot, indicates, however, an approaching degree of civilization.

The Kabyle is primarily a tiller of the soil and a herder of goats and sheep. And when education was thrust upon him, or rather upon his children, by a progressive French government, he resented it. He had cut out an illiterate career for his progeny; he didn't care if they weren't educated, nor did they.

He explained it all to the writer in a Moorish café one afternoon, in a *patois* something like the following,—it's a queer thing, Arab-French, but it's as good as that of most foreigners nevertheless.

"*Si li Beylick fasir, fic toutes lis enfants dis mitres d'icole, qu'ist-ce qui travaljar la tirre ... qu'ist-ce qui gardi lis chèvres, lis motons, lis vaches?*" Who indeed will guard his goats and sheep if the children all go to school! The old man probably will have to work himself.

The new generation is changing, but the old-school Kabyle is as conservative as a "down-east farmer," a "Yorkshireman," or a "*bon Provençeau*."

The Kabyles are the Piedmontese or Auvergnats of Algeria. An indigenous race which has resisted better than any other the march of progress. They have, too, certain other foreign characteristics. One wonders how they got them. They practise the vendetta, like the Corsican; they have the *landesgemeinde*, as in certain of the Swiss cantons; and they have cock-fights like the Spaniards. They are a very curious race of people, but they are becoming enlightened, and rank among the most loyal towards the new French government of all the tribes of Algeria.

The Kabyle has fought for France, and fought well. The first zouaves were Kabyles,—the name comes from Zouaoua, a Kabyle tribe. General Clauzel enrolled a company of them in 1831, and taught them what, he was pleased at the time to think, was civilized warfare. Doubtless it was, as civilized as any warfare, which is not saying much for it. This new type of soldier, the zouave, has endured to this day in France and elsewhere, and a very practical, businesslike soldier he has proved.

The Kabyle women jingle with bijoux and scintillate with yards of ribbons and flying draperies, and a strong scented perfume emanates from them with an odour of sanctity, almost, so strange and exotic is it. They know the difficult art of elegance—these mountain women of Kabylie—better than their more fashionable sisters. Not all the science of the *couturière* or the *modiste* can give a tithe of the grace borne naturally by these half-savage Kabyle beauties. The Jewesses of Algiers and Tunis have a certain, if crude, voluptuous elegance, which is an adulteration of civilization and savagery; but the Kabyle woman, beneath her draperies and her bijoux, expresses something quite different. Cleopatra might well have been one of them.

Their natural graces and their bijoux are the details which set off their charms so splendidly. The cross-breeding of the Berber with the Arab has no doubt debased the race somewhat. This is mostly among the men and the women who dwell in the towns.

Apparently these Kabyle women are not coquettes, though they smile, always, with their pearly teeth, rouge-red lips, and flashing eyes, bespeaking the sensuality of a land and its customs entirely foreign to European civilization. Of beauty they have little according to other standards, although their features are not crude or unlovely. Rather is theirs the beauty of a high-bred animal, or the sculptured bronze ideal replica of a race. They are types of a species and are delightful to look upon, alike in face and figure.

The Kabyle jewelry is something to be coveted by every woman. It can be bought—even in the bazaars and *souks* of Algiers and Tunis—at its weight for old silver. But the buying of it is an art, and one must beware of not getting dross or something made in Birmingham or Solingen. The genuine old stone or





Things Seen in Kabylie

coral-set enamelled Kabyle bracelets and necklaces are becoming rarer, and the imitation ones more and more common. Still, in any aspect, the designs are beautiful, and far and away ahead of the aberrations of mind which produce the *art-nouveau* jewelery of Bond Street or of the Rue de la Paix. Sometimes instead of silver a substitute of dull, unburnished white metal,—pewter most probably,—is used in the settings of these bizarre ornaments, and even then the effect is charming.

The Kabyles have ever been fond of coral, which, from the earliest times, they gathered from the sea, cutting and polishing the fragments as if they were precious stones. Coral is fast disappearing from the African coast, as

elsewhere in the Mediterranean, wherever the Italians have exploited the commerce, and the rosy, translucent branches of old are now more often replaced with the inferior dead coral of a yellowish white or even reddish brown colour. Unless indeed celluloid imitations are not used instead.

Sea shells, too, enter into the make-up of the adornments of the Kabyle woman.

The metal work, be it gold, silver, or pewter and antimony, is invariably hand-forged, with the loving marks of the hammer still visible. This rough crudity is its charm, for the intrinsic value as a rule is not great. It looks high at fifty francs (a collaret of three or four bands strung together on a silver wire, with a clasp the size of a half-dollar), but when, by the classic process of Arab or Berber bargaining, you get the same thing for ten francs, it is really *très bon marché*.

Grande and Petite Kabylie, the Kabylie du Djurjura and the Kabylie des Babors, is not thickly strewn with Frenchified towns and cities. On the coast there are Dellys, an incipient seaport. Bougie, the ancient Saldae, where a colony of veterans was established by the great Augustus, but now a growing seaport with half of its fifteen thousand population French. Djidjelli, a hundred kilometres east of Bougie by a wonderful coast road, was the ancient colony of Igilgili of Augustus. Collo is an Italianized fishing village; Beni-Mançour, a flourishing small town to-day, but formerly a simple *bordj* or halting-place on the main caravan route from east to west; and Setif, the *chef lieu*, contains a mixed population of 15,000, of which a quarter part are Europeans and 1,600 Jews.

These commercial centres, and a half a dozen smaller places, are the only points where the traveller by road or rail will find any approach to European comforts in all Kabylie, excepting at Tizi-Ouzou and Fort National on the branch road from Beni-Mançour to Bougie.

Tizi-Ouzou is the centre of a Kabyle population which figures out a hundred and ten souls to the square kilometre. Its name signifies "Col des Genets," and it occupies the site of an old *bordj* or rest-house of former days.

Four hours of diligence—which costs four francs—carries one from Tizi-Ouzou to Fort National, at any time of the year between April and December; at other times the pass of Tirourda may be snow-covered, and you may become stalled for hours or even days. Fort National, in the heart of Grande Kabylie, is a grim, modern fortress, perched on the highest peak of the Algerian mountain range paralleling the coast. It is only interesting from a grim picturesque point of view. The citadel crowns a height a thousand metres above sea-level, and from its terrace unfolds a remarkable panorama of mountain-tops and valleys: "Incipient mountain chains stretching out in all directions like the arms of an octopus," a Frenchman described these topographical features, and if you know what an octopus looks like you will be struck by the simile. Fort National is the best centre from which to make excursions into Kabylie, but you must come here in the spring or autumn for the purpose, not in winter or summer.

Bougie is off the beaten track. To get there one must break his journey going from Algiers to Biskra, Constantine or Tunis at Beni-Mançour. Bougie is a coast town, and one of the terminals of the steamship lines from Marseilles. Because tourists go and come via Algiers, or via Algiers and Tunis or vice versa, Bougie is not known of all travellers in North Africa. This is where they make a mistake. Bougie is the most splendidly situated of all the African Mediterranean ports. Its points of view and panoramas are ready-made for the artists to jot them down in crude paint on dull canvas—if they can. The most one can do is to try. And Bougie, its glistening white-walled houses, its shore-line, its sky-line, and its background of cliff are motifs which will fascinate all who view it,

whether for the first or last time.

All the same Bougie has little enough of interest for the conventional tourist. The native quarter is not remarkable, the mosque is a modern affair, though on good old lines, and the native market, if curious, does not equal those of Blida, Boufarik, or Constantine.

It is the site of Bougie, and its environs, that make its charms. If its hotels were not poor patterns of those of the pompous prefectures in France it would really be a delightful seaside resort.

There are some Roman ruins of the days of Augustus still remaining, some fragmentary fortifications, and some great cistern vaults. Bougie's past was historic, for it was one day the capital of an independent state. The Spaniards came and destroyed its independence through the wiles of Pedro Navarro, who built Algiers' Peñon. Charles V sojourned here for a time, basking under African skies, in 1541. That is all of Bougie's romance.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONSTANTINE AND THE GORGE DU RUMMEL

CONSTANTINE is one of the natural citadels of the world. Hitherto we had only known it by name, and that chiefly by the contemplation of Vernet's "Siége de Constantine," in that artistic graveyard, the Musée de Versailles.

The bizarre splendour of the site now occupied by the bustling Algerian metropolis of Constantine struck us very forcibly as we rolled over its great gorge just at sundown on a ruddy autumn evening. It is all grandly theatrical, but it is very real nevertheless. A great deal more real than one would believe as he viewed that hodge-podge painting of Vernet's.

The town sits high on a ravine-surrounded peak of bare

rock, and were it to undergo a siege to-day, not even modern war-engines could reduce it till the dwellers had been starved out.

The original settlement was very ancient long before the Romans of the time of Scipio, who gave it its present name. Romans, Arabs, Vandals, and Turks all held it in turn until General Valée came in 1836 and drove the latter out by strategy. Not by siege, as the painter has tried to make us believe.

The great rock of Constantine is only attached to the surrounding country by a slim neck of land. Below lies the Rummel, still cutting its bed deeper and deeper each year, until now a very cañon is gouged out of the city's rock foundation. The only communication between the city and the surrounding plateau is by the Bridge of El Kantara, spectacularly picturesque, though not artistically beautiful, the successor of an old Roman bridge on the same site.

Any who have marvelled at the Bridge of Ronda in Spain, and at the natural rock-bound fortress to which it leads, will observe its similarity to Constantine. Its rocky walls are impregnable, though not untakable. Nothing but a continuous dynamite performance could blow up Constantine; to accomplish it would be to blow up a mountain. Nevertheless, the French captured the Mohammedan fortress at the time of the occupation—albeit at a great expenditure of time and loss of men.

Centuries earlier than this, in Roman days, Sallust, governor of the province under Cæsar, was a property owner here, and fortified the city that it might best protect his interests. With what success is seen by the fact that, though the fortress was besieged and taken eighty times, its garrison was always starved out; it was never blown up or battered down.

The first glimpse of Constantine is confusing. It is difficult to separate its component parts; its historic

picturesqueness from its matter-of-fact hurly-burly of commercial affairs. The houses seen from the railway appear commonplace and uninteresting, only saved from sheer ugliness by their remarkable situation. The great gorge of the Rummel flows beneath the ugly iron bridge,—the successor of that more splendid work of the Romans,—and ugly trams, omnibuses, and carts rumble along where one pictures troops of camels and parti-coloured Arabs. Arabs there are at Constantine, of all shades, and Turks and Jews, of all sects, and when one is actually settled down in his hotel and starts out on a wandering, with the intention of focussing all these things into some definite impression, they begin to grow upon him, and Constantine begins to take rank with the liveliest of his imaginings and memories. Constantine is a wonder, there is no doubt about that; but one must become acquainted with it intimately in order to love it. Constantine's streets are running rivers of as mixed a crew of humanity as one may see out of Cairo, Constantinople, or Port Saïd. Tunis is its nearest approach in the Moghreb.





A Minaret at Constantine

The main artery of the Arab town is the Rue Perrégaux. Here are the Moorish cafés, the mosques, the shops of the sweetmeat sellers, the vegetable dealers, the embroiderers, and the jewellers. The Cirta of Jugurtha has become the Constantine of to-day, but its mediævalism still lives in spite of the contrast of a gaudy opera house, a bank, and an "hôtel-de-ville." The native quarter keeps well to itself, however; and modern improvements do not



A Constantine Mosque

encroach upon its picturesque primitiveness as they do at Algiers.

Beside its site and its bridge, Constantine's monuments are not many or great. The chief one is the Mosque of Salah Bey, with its marble decorations chiselled out by the hand of the slave of an olden time. The cathedral of to-day is built up out of a transformed mosque, but shows, undefiled, its ancient Mauresque arcades and faïences. On

the broidered *mihrab*, with inscriptions from the Koran woven in the woof, some well-meaning Christian has added a bleeding heart. Is this treating the original Mussulman owner right? It seems enough to make a Christian church out of a Mohammedan mosque, without trying to incorporate two opposing religious symbols in a mural decoration.

The ancient palace of the Bey,—the last Bey of Constantine, Hadj-Ahmed,—though comparatively modern, is a very interesting building. This terrible Turk, the Bey, was a very terrible potentate indeed. He massacred and pillaged his own subjects. He would nail the hands and feet of a fancied offender to a tree, leaving him to die, and would sew up the mouths and manacle the hands of those who spoke ill of him. He held a big club always uplifted, and many other murderous implements besides were ever in the air ready to fall. This palace of the Bey's was in course of construction at the time the Turkish domination fell. It had been built of porphyry and marble columns, and fine old tiles and sculptured balustrades, brought by rich merchants as presents to the Bey, under pain of imprisonment should they default. It is a miniature Alhambra of courts within courts, and is really extraordinarily beautiful. It covers an area of over five thousand square metres. Under the guidance of a zouave with baggy red trousers and a fez dangling on the back of his head, we walked and circumnavigated all of the paved and orange-planted quadrangles, and quite believed we were living in the days gone by, in spite of the fact that tram-cars were passing by the door, and inconsiderate, *un-churchly* chimes were ringing out ribald airs from the neighbouring cathedral tower.

On the whole the old Beylical palace of Constantine is far more elaborate and interesting than the Dar-el-Bey at Tunis—or the Bardo, usually reckoned the chief tourist sights of their class. It all depends on the mood, of course,

but then we had the mood.

Some of the frescoes of this palace of Turkish dominion are most curious. One of them, painted in the most crude and infantile manner, is inexplicable except for the following legend.

A "dog of a Christian slave"—as his Turkish master called him—was set at the task. He knew nothing of art, but that did not matter to the domineering Turk, who said that "all Frenchmen were born artists." The frieze was completed, as it may be seen to-day, and the artist (?) stood before his workmanship in fear and trembling, dreading his master's wrath. The wrath was not forthcoming. His Beyship liked the frieze of birds as big as houses, of ships and frogs all of a size, of cows the size of mosques, and all the other fantasies of an untrained hand and brain. "I told you," said the Bey, "all these dogs of Frenchmen know how to paint;" and with that he set him free. All potentates have their vagaries. Hadj-Ahmed's were no greater and no worse than the present German Emperor's, which have permitted, if not commanded, political portraits to be sculptured on the portals of a Christian church.

Constantine is unique. It is a city as live and bustling as any of its size on earth. It is undergoing a great development. Everybody is prosperous and contented. And, above all, it is historic, and its native quarter unspoiled in spite of the city's great attempts to become a commercial metropolis.

Constantine is the gateway to a vast and wealthy grain-growing region, and it sits high and proud on the great central plateau of Algeria between the desert and the sea. Practically it is the sole gateway or means of communication through which passes a great proportion of all the life and movement of the great province of which it is the capital. Contrastingly Constantine's magnificently theatrical site gives entirely another view-point for the stranger within its gates. The great gorge of the Rummel

cuts the city entirely off from the surrounding plateau by a thousand foot chasm, where the gathered waters of the plain roll and thunder with such regularity and force that the steep sides are cut sheer as if by the quarryman's drill. Constantine's Arab town, too, is entirely a unique thing. It is complete, unspoiled, and genuine. It sits off at one side of the European town, sloping down towards the steep brink of the gorge, and is entirely uncontaminated with the contemporary life of the French. Its colouring is marvellous; and the comings and goings, and the daily affairs, of its Arab merchants and traders lend a charm





of antiquity which not even the realization of the fact that we are living in the twentieth century can wholly spoil. The Kabyle with his skins of oil, the Berber with his wool and leathers, and the town-bred Arab—half Turk, half Jew —occupying himself with all sorts of trading, give a local colour rich and unmixed, such as one finds nowhere else in the East,—either at Algiers, Tunis, Cairo, or Constantinople. What is lacking is mere size and grandeur, —the rest is all there. And the Moorish cafés and the sweetmeat and pastry sellers' shops of Constantine's Arab

town, visited on the eve of Ramadan, give such a variety of surprises that no one who has once seen them can ever forget them.

To return to the great scenic charm of Constantine; it must be seen and familiarized. As a mere gorge it is no more wonderful than dozens of others,—in the Rockies in America; in the Tarn, or the Gorges du Loup, in the Maures. What the Gorge du Rummel stands for is that it is, and has been for ages, the chief defence of the great city of Constantine, and for that reason it appeals more strongly than any other of its kind.

Before entering the narrow chasm which renders the position of Constantine, "*la ville aérienne*," well-nigh impregnable, the Rummel, or Rivière des Sables, has joined forces with the Boumezou, the river which fertilizes.

The change is sudden from the sunny valley to the dark Passage des Roches. The torrent, suddenly narrowed, passes close to a hot spring spurting forth from a cleft in the rock, then flowing through the arch of the Devil's Bridge and tumbling in cascades through the winding chasm or ravine.

From the edge of the abyss one cannot see the stream which is hidden by the curves of the ravine; the projecting strata of rock furrowed at frequent intervals by vertical water-worn clefts even prevent one from seeing the bottom.

Just below the rock bridge of El Kantara (that of to-day being a reconstruction of the Roman work), the Rummel disappears beneath a vault of rock. The ravine here is only a narrow trench, torn and pierced by underground passages, from the bottom of which rises the sound of rushing waters. Three hundred metres beyond, the torrent emerges from these dark galleries and on both sides the cliffs rise vertically. A single isolated arch, naturally ogival

and singularly regular in form, still uniting the two walls of rock.

Here the irregularities and rents in the earth's surface are the most imposing; the walls of variously coloured rock here and there overhang and rise to a height of over 200 metres, giving a perilous foothold to the buildings of the town above. At this apex of the island city above is the Kef Cnecora or Rocher du Lac, from which an old-time *pacha* threw down his recalcitrant wives sewn up in sacks, quite after the conventional manner of the day, one thinks. Yes, but here they had an awful drop, and fell not always on the soft watery bed of the river, but on the pointed, jagged rocks of the rapids. Theirs must have been an awful death!

Years ago access to the ravine was entirely impracticable; but since an intrepid engineer with a ninety-nine year concession has built rock ladders and bridges along its whole length—and charges two francs to cross them—the experience of making this semisubterranean tour of Constantine is within reach of everybody.

One day at Constantine a discordant rumbling of voices in the street below attracted us to the windows of our hotel. A strange, conglomerate procession of Mussulman faithful was marching by. Hundreds of brown Arab folk, Kabyles, Moors, and nomads from the south, were marching hand in hand, each with a flower behind his right ear, and all shouting at the top of their voices. A funeral procession had passed but a few moments before, and we thought it a part of the same ceremony, though indeed, as we learned later, it was something quite different.





A Mussulman Funeral

The few straggling hundreds of the head of the procession soon grew into thousands, all chanting verses of the Koran. Following close came the gaily coloured green, white, and red flag of the Prophet.

We followed in the wake of the procession and at the end of the town came to the Mussulman cemetery. There is no remarkable sadness or sentiment about the Arab cemetery at Constantine, at least not such as one associates with a Christian burial-place. It sits on the sunny slope of a hill, with a silhouette of mountains for a background, and a foreground strewn, helter-skelter, with little tombs and *koubas* in crazy building-block fashion. There is no symmetry about anything, and tiny headstones crop up here and there through a tangle of weeds and wild flowers. Frequently there is a more imposing slab, and occasionally a tomb or *kouba* tinted blue or pink, with perhaps its dome gilded. The whole impression, however, is of an indiscriminate mixture of things that just "happened in place," and were not set out on any preconceived plan.

One imposing domed *kouba* has a bit of shade from an

overgrowing tree and is surrounded by a little level grass-plot which gives it a certain distinction of dignity such as a religious shrine should have.

Beyond the cemetery was a great open plot upon which was to be held the Mussulman fête, which was the real objective of the fast-growing procession, and which by this time had gathered into its fold all of Constantine's available Mussulman population,—some twenty-five thousand souls who habitually say their prayers to Allah.

Here at the fête the thousands of Arabs, their yellow, red, or green burnouses flowing in the breeze like flags and pennants, grouped themselves first of all around the *khaouadji*, or open-air cafés, the drinking of coffee being the preliminary to every social function with the Arab.

At the further end of the open ground were set up the tents of the great chiefs,—the Caïds and Cadis of the surrounding tribes, and along one side were grouped cook-shops and fruit-sellers. There were no "hurdy-gurdies," "Aunt Sallies," or "shooting galleries." The Arab takes his pleasures and makes his rejoicings less violently, preferring to squat on his heels, or lie on a straw mat, and drink coffee, smoke cigarettes, or munch a handful of dates or a honey-cake boiled in oil.

One general cook-shop occupied a prominent place. Here were great copper cauldrons where the couscous was being prepared. This indigenous Algerian dish is about the only one containing meat which the temperate Arab eats. Even then he eats mostly of the *semoule* and bread and gravy, leaving the fragments of mutton or lamb, or chicken (if by chance one wandered aimlessly into the pot) to be boiled down again for another brew.

The Arab eats his couscous out of a great wooden platter, and disdains knife or fork or spoon. A dozen Arabs sit around this shallow bowl of wood and dip their fingers into it, each in his proper turn. It is a sort of game of grab.

One may get a choice morsel, or he may not. If not as cleanly a method of eating as that of the Chinaman's chopsticks, at any rate one's appetite is sooner satisfied. The Arab has the true spirit of *camaraderie* in his eating and drinking. The most cultivated and fastidious will mingle with the hoi-polloi, and eat from the same dish and drink from the same *merdjil* as the most miserable one among the crowd.

The fête, for such it was, seemed to have little religious significance, beyond the marching in procession and chanting, and the fact that it was being held in proximity to holy ground. After the feast there was something like a demonstration, when two score or more Arabs did a sort of a fanatical dance or swirl, which reminded one of the combination of an Indian war-dance and the gyrations of the dervishes of Cairo. Shrill cries and dislocating leaps and bounds brought some of the participants, in time, to a state of inanimation and convulsions; but still the others kept on. One by one a dancer would drop out, this evidently being the way the game was played. When we finally came away, half of them were still bounding about in a frenzy of delirium.

We learned later they were a sect of Islam, called the Aïssaouas, whose principal tenet of faith is the mortification of the flesh. There are various ways of doing this: the hair shirt, flagellation, and crawling about on the hands and knees; but the way of the Aïssaouas is certainly the most violent. Some of them even go so far as to pierce the cheeks and nose with great pins and needles; but if one can swirl and gyrate himself into an epileptic state, his chances of grace and entrance into that Paradise of Houris promised by Mahomet are just as good.

The fête finally came to an end sometime during the night. Then the cook-shops and *khaouadjis* piled up their belongings in a donkey cart, or on camel-back, and the Arabs folded their tents and silently stole away after the

manner set forth in the fable.

The marabout in whose honour all this came about was then left in peace to sleep his long sleep undisturbed until the same orgie should be repeated the following year.

The environs of Constantine are marvellously beautiful. Northward towards Philippeville by road or rail one rises to the Col des Oliviers by zigzags and sharp turns, to descend eventually—a matter of a couple of thousand feet or more—to the brilliant blue Mediterranean. Nearer at hand, rising high above Constantine itself, are the hills of Mansourah and Sidi-M'cid, and to the west the fertile valley of the Hamma.

Philippeville is interesting only because of its site, which lies on the beautiful Gulf of Stora, an ancient port of the Romans. The monuments of Philippeville are nearly nil. There are some few fragments of the arcades of an old amphitheatre, and the modern mosque, though in no way an ambitious monument, is picturesquely perched above the town. The great square, or *place*, opposite the port is a modern improvement which is commendable enough, but not in the least in keeping with Africa. It is more like a cheap imitation of Monte Carlo's terrace.

The Italian influence is strong in all these parts. The village of Stora, about four kilometres from Philippeville, is practically peopled by Italians. And one hears as much Italian as he does French in the streets of Philippeville. The little house-corner shrines to be found all over the older part of the town are also frankly reminiscent of Italy.

In the bay, too, the little lateen-rigged, clipper-prowed fishing-boats are Italian in design, and are manned by Italians. Right here one recalls that the "sunny Italian" in a foreign land is almost invariably a "digger of dirt," a worker on a railway or canal cutting, or a fisherman.

Philippeville has a decided colour of its own, but it is not Arab, and the French is so blended with the Italian that

its colouring is decidedly mixed.

CHAPTER XIX

BETWEEN THE DESERT AND THE SOWN

SOUTH from Constantine to Biskra at the desert's edge is two hundred kilometres as the crow flies. As the humble apology of an *express*-train goes, the distance is covered in eight hours, and that's almost fifteen miles an hour. Delightful, isn't it? At the same time this snail's-pace gives one a chance to observe things as he goes along, and there is much to observe.

The high plateau on which sits Constantine, surrounded by its grain fields and its grazing-grounds, is a vastly productive region, and prosperity for the European and the *indigène* comes easily enough. The conditions of life here are more comfortable than elsewhere in the Algerian countryside, save perhaps in the Mitidja around Blida.

This great plateau of the Tell, the granary of Africa and one of the finest wheat-growing belts of the old world, knows well the rigours of winter; but the summer is long and hot, and crops push out from the ground with an abundance known nowhere else in these parts.

The mountains of "Grande Kabylie" bound it on the west and north, and the Aures on the east and south. Beyond is the desert and its oases. The contrast of topography and climate between the desert and the "sown" is remarkable. All changes in the twinkling of an eye as one passes through the rocky gorge of El Kantara,—one of those mythological marvels accomplished by the hand or heel of Hercules. At any rate, the cleft in the rock wall is there, and in a hundred yards one leaves the winds and chilly atmosphere of a late autumn or early winter's day behind, and plunges into the still, burning atmosphere of

the desert, with palm-tree oases scattered here and there. The same phenomenon may be observed elsewhere, but not in so forcible a fashion. At Batna in winter you may see an occasional bear-skin coat, with the "fur side out," and at Biskra, sixty odd miles away, you will find a temperature of say 30 degrees centigrade—86 degrees Fahrenheit.

En route from Constantine by railway no towns or cities of note are passed until the great military post of Batna is reached. Here one may break his journey and get an aspect of the mingling life of the desert and the town Arab, which is astonishing in its complexity. The town Arab lives much as we do ourselves,—at least some of his species do,—wears, sometimes, a Norfolk jacket and shoes, which he calls "*forme Américaine*," and travels first-class on the railway when he takes his promenades abroad. The other still clings to his burnous and takes off his shoes at every opportunity, travelling by camel caravan, as did his ancestors of a thousand years ago.

Batna itself possesses no monuments of note. It is, however, the starting-point for Lambessa and Timgad, the finest ancient Roman ruined cities left standing above ground to-day,—not excepting Pompeii. A résumé of the delights of these fascinating Roman relics is given in another chapter of this book.

Batna possesses a remarkably well-kept commercial hotel, the "Hôtel des Étrangers et Continentals." It is not a tourist hotel, which is all the better for it. Moreover it has electric lights in the bedrooms, and a very distinctive and excellent menu on the table. What more could one want—in what people are wont to think of as savage Africa?

We took a likely looking Arab for a guide at Batna, though indeed there was nothing special in the immediate neighbourhood for him to guide us to. He wore a "Touring Club de France" badge in his turban, and read religiously each month the T. C. F. "*Revue*," and accordingly he

appropriated every stranger as his right, whether one would or no. He was useful, however, in keeping off other importunate Arabs in the great market as we strolled between the stalls.

Batna's negro village is curiously interesting, though squalid and in ill repute among the authorities.

"*Ici le village nègre*;" says your Arab guide after you have trudged a couple of kilometres over a real desert trail. There are only a few of these "black blocks" in North Africa, the negroes usually mingling with the Arabs.

At night, in Batna's *village nègre*, one might think he was in some head-centre of voodooism, so quaint and discordant are the sights and sounds. Negroes are much the same the world over, whenever they herd together, whether they come from the Soudan, Guinea, or Alabama.

Here in Algeria the negro café is a coffee-shop only a shade more murky than the other coffee-shops. And the faces of those squatting round about, though they glisten in the smoky atmosphere,—ineffectually penetrated by a dim light radiating from a swinging lamp in the centre,—are more dusky.

A tumultuous, raucous chant breaks out above a murmur now and then, though most of the time the sound is a mysterious crooning wail, the genuine negro wail, which is not at all like the banshee's, but quite as penetrating.

It might be a prison cell or the hold of a slave-ship, this negro café, for all one can distinguish of its appointments. There is nothing luxurious here; it is not classy or exclusive in the least. A *sou* a cup is the price the negro pays for his coffee. And since he hasn't the Arabs' prejudices against strong drink, he can get beet-root and turnip-top *cognac* and chemically made absinthe at cut-rate prices, which appeal largely to his pocket, if not his taste.

This symphony in dusk, and in thin, shrill so-called music, is impressive. There are negro musicians, negro

dancing-women, and a negro proprietor. It's the real, unadulterated "coontown" drama, where the players are the real thing, and not the coffee-coloured "In-Dahomey" kind.

One touch of white only was to be seen in Batna's negro café. This was an Arab of the Hauts-Plateaux, with a long, aquiline profile and a flowing burnous and *haïk*, most probably the lover of one of the trio of dancing-women. His emotions were passive. He might have been at home under his own vine and fig-tree. Still he was out of place, and looked it. The most he would do was to give a sickly smile at some rude pleasantry of his black companions,—and we did that ourselves.

What of this negro company were not drinking thick, muddy coffee or "caravan" tea were smoking *kif*. The odour of opium, mint, and kerosene was abominable. A negro of the Soudan might stand it, but not a white man; at least none whiter than the lone Arab. So we passed on our way, the dancing-women shrieking, the shrill trumpet or *chalumeau* squealing, the tambourine jangling, and the oil-lamp smoking. It was not heavenly.

Batna has a very excellent French school for Arab children, and it is there that the young idea learns how to "*parler Français*." The French schools are doing good work, no doubt, but they are spoiling the simplicity of the native.

At Batna we saw a school "prize-giving," which was conducted as follows:

"Premier prix d'application," called out a black-coated preceptor, "Abdurhaman-ben-Mohammed, Arachin-el-Oumach." "Boum! Boum!" shouted the rest of the class.

Second prize, third prize, and so on; and all the little ragtag brown and black population came up in a long file,—they all got prizes apparently,—and the whole thing wound up, as all French functions do, even if they are in the heart of Africa, with the singing of the "Marseillaise."

The next objective point, going south from Batna, is El Kantara and its gorge.

If ever Longfellow's poetic lines were applicable, they are here.

"Suddenly the pathway ends,
Sheer the precipice descends,
Loud the torrent roars unseen;
Thirty feet from side to side,
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride
He who crosses this ravine."

El Kantara is easily the most remarkable "sight" of all Algeria. Its Hotel Bertrand is a most excellently verandaed establishment,—almost the only house in the place,—and one may sit on its gallery and watch a continual stream of camels, horses, mules, and donkeys going by its dooryard all the livelong day. The trail of other days has now become a "Route Nationale," and is the only means of highway communication, for a hundred miles east or west, between the plateau lands of the north and the desert of the south. Here all roads and tracks coming from a wide area in the north converge to a narrow thread of a road which squeezes itself between the uprights of the rocky walls of the Gorge of El Kantara.

The Romans knew this cleft in the rocky wall, and built a fine old Roman bridge to clear the rushing torrent below. The bridge is still there, an enduring monument to the Roman builder, but a new road and a railway bridge now overhang it; so it remains simply as a milestone in the march of progress.

The red curtain-rocks of the mountain chain at El Kantara form the dividing-line between the north and the south. Suddenly, as one clears the threshold, he comes upon a smiling oasis of a hundred thousand date-palms, where a kilometre back was a sterile, pebbly plateau-plain. Three little baked-mud villages, the "*Village Rouge*," the

"*Village Blanc*," and the "*Village Noir*," huddle about the banks of the Oued Kantara with waving palms overhead and a rushing, gurgling torrent at their feet.



The Village and the Gorge of El Kantara

There are mouflons and gazelles in the mountains on either side, and "the chase" is one of the inducements held out by the hotel and Messaoud-ben-Ghebana to prolong your stay. They don't guarantee you either a mouflon (which is the "Barbary sheep" the novelists write about) or a gazelle; but Messaoud-ben-Ghebana will find them if any one can, and charge you only five francs a day for his services,—including a donkey to carry the traps.

There are three classic excursions to be made at El Kantara,—always, of course, with Messaoud as guide. To the Gorges de Tilatou, to the Gorges de Maafa, and to

Beni-Ferah. You may get a gazelle on the way, or you may not, but you will experience mountain exploration in all its primitiveness. If you like it, you can keep it up for a week or a month, for El Kantara is a much finer centre for making excursions from, or indeed for spending the winter in, than Biskra and its overrated attractions of great hotels, afternoon tea, Quaker Oats, Huntley & Palmer's, and "Dundee,"—what the French call orange marmalade,—with which the grocers fill their shop-windows to catch visitors from across the seas.

El Kantara is an artist's paradise; the mountains, the desert, the palms of the oasis, and the native villages are all close at hand, and there, a short stroll away, is the ocean of sand itself.

The Artist set up shop *en plein désert* one day, and turned her back for a moment only, when the outfit, white umbrella, paint-box, and camp-stool all disappeared as if buried in the dunes of sand. Not a trace of them was to be seen, nor of any living thing or person either, only a dim, shadowy low-spread tent, which had mysteriously sprung up beneath a neighbouring date-palm while her attention had been called away. From its cavernous door slowly emerged a real desert Arab and a train of followers, consisting of two or three women and a numerous progeny. Perhaps they knew something of a white umbrella, etc. No, they didn't. At least the father of the family didn't; but suddenly he spied under a corner of the tent flap something strange and hitherto unrecognized.

The umbrella was all right, also the stool, but the paint-box had been turned out, and the tubes looked, half of them, thin and twisted, as though they had been emptied; as indeed they had,—sucked dry by some of that numerous progeny like enough, though no ill effects were apparent. All was taken in at a glance, and the afore-mentioned father of the family turned on his offspring and called them "*putains de juif du Mellah*," "*rénégads*," "*voleurs*,"

"*racines amères*" and much more vituperation of the same kind. Apologies were profuse, but after all was said and done, we felt quite grateful for the exhibition of righteous wrath. The desert Arab is a stern father if a good one.

The Arab makes you angry sometimes, but in this case it was the children who had caused the trouble, and ragamuffins the world over lack responsibility, so that can't be laid to the Arab.

CHAPTER XX

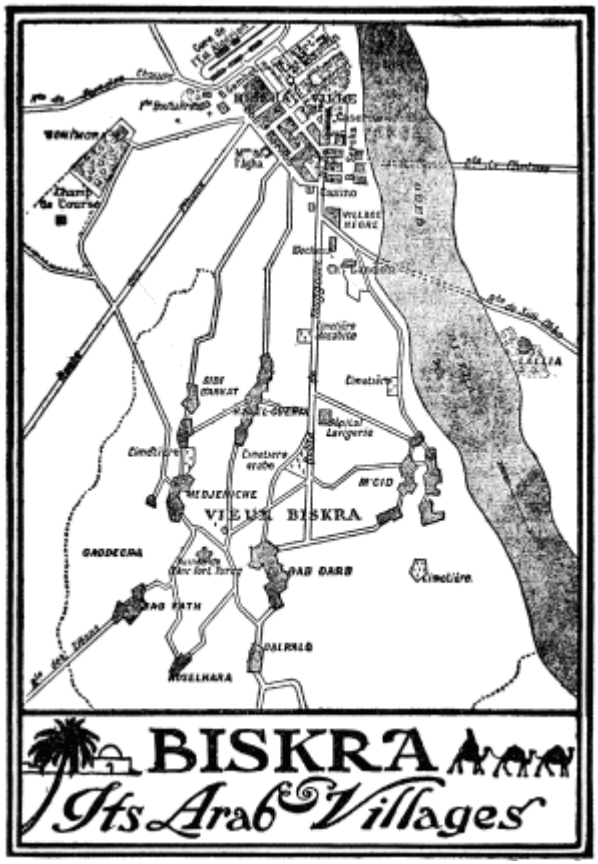
BISKRA AND THE DESERT BEYOND

Biskra, tout le monde descend! ouf! It might be Jersey City or Chicago; one experiences at last that sense of having reached a journey's end. At least it will seem so to most who come to the desert's edge by train from Constantine or Algiers, after two days of as rocky, uncomfortable railway travelling as one can imagine in these progressive days.

Biskra is commonly reputed the ideal of a desert oasis, but indeed as an oasis it is no more delightful than that at El Kantara. Not every one will find his "Garden of Allah" at Biskra. Biskra is by no means all things to all men. Leaving out the silly sentiment, which has been propagated by a school of writers who take themselves too seriously, there is nothing at Biskra which is not better elsewhere.

It is truly, though, a typical desert oasis, and the town which has grown up around it is but the natural outcome of trade following the flag, for Biskra is the commercial and military gateway to the Sud-Constantinois.





Biskra is not without its distinctive character. Its native life, its market, and its Moorish coffee-house, are all typical; but in a way they have become contaminated with the influx from the outside world and much of their colour has paled.

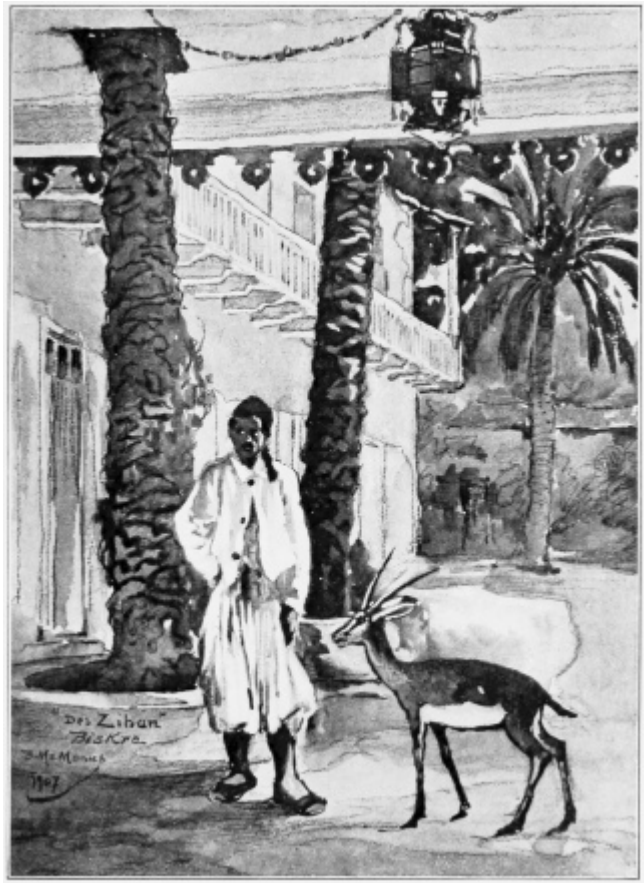
One of the curses Biskra bestows upon the stranger within her gates is that of an innumerable and importunate crew of guides,—of all colours and shades, of all grades of intelligence, and of all degrees of proficiency in French. The guides of Biskra wear turbans, coifs, and fezes. They look as though they belonged to every Mohammedan tribe

of the universe. Those who wear bowler hats are harder to place; one rather suspects that they are Jews.

"Get a guide to keep off the other guides," is the best advice one can give the stranger to Biskra. What makes this state of affairs? Too much exploitation, and too many lavish and foolish English and Americans. In this respect Biskra is not as bad as Cairo, but it is getting that way.

Biskra's attractions for the visitor are many of them artificial. There are the great hotels, with their "halls," "smoking-rooms," "reading-rooms," and "bars," and the incipient





The Courtyard of the Hôtel des Ziban, Biskra

Casino with its music and “distractions;” and there is the Café Glacier with its cool drinks at Paris prices. Everything at Biskra is good in quality, but lacking character. One hotel stands out above all others for excellence and distinctive features. It is the Hôtel des Ziban. It has a distinctive clientèle, made up largely of personages such as the officers of the garrison, a great Sheik or Caïd of a southern tribe, a grim, taciturn individual with a dozen decorations on his breast, a

government official, a minister, perhaps, and so on. And of course tourists as well, for tourists are everywhere at Biskra, even in the Rue Sainte, where they ought not to be, —at least not after dark.

Biskra's chief tourist "sights," after the palm-tree oases of old Biskra and the Jardin Landon, are the Moorish cafés, and the *naylettes*, or Ouled-Naïl dancers, of the Rue Sainte. One need not affect this sort of thing if he doesn't want to; but, aside from playing bridge in the hotel parlours, or drinking beer in the Café Glacier and listing to "la musique" of "les artistes Parisiennes," there is not much else to do at night except doze in the hotel smoking-room or *salon*, with scores of other fat old ladies and gentlemen.

The *café maure* or Moorish coffee-shop of North Africa has no distinct form of architecture. It may be a transformed shop in the European quarter; the vestibule of a Moorish habitation, or of a mosque; a stone or mud hut by the roadside overhung by a great waving banana plant or palm; or it may be a striped lean-to tent. The interior fittings vary also. In the towns the oven is built up of blue and yellow tiles, and the pots and cups are kept on a great slab of marble or tile. By the roadside there are the cups and a tin or copper pot; but the supplies are invariably kept in an unsoldered five-gallon kerosene can. These come out from Philadelphia by the hundreds of thousands, and find their way to all the corners of the earth. The Japanese and the Chinese use them to roof their huts with; the Singapore boatmen to carry their water-supply; and the Arab as cooking utensils, and very useful they are. They are a by-product and cost nothing, except to the Standard Oil Company, the original shippers.

The Moorish cafés of Biskra are as typical of their class as any seen in the towns, even though they are tourist "sights."

The whole establishment is gaudy and crude, with its plastered walls, its rough, unpainted furnishings, its seats

and benches all smoke-coloured, as if they were centuries old,—though probably they are not. In the rear, always in plain view, is the *oudjak*, the vaulted oven or heater, where the thick, syrupy coffee is brewed and kept hot. The chief notes of colour are the little wine-glasses, the cups, the water-bottles, the tiled backgrounds, and the head-gear of the habitués, and the parrot—always a parrot, in his crudely built cage. The establishments of Biskra are typical *cafés maures*, and might well be on the edge or middle of the desert itself, instead of in a very Frenchified Algerian city of eight thousand inhabitants.

Here are congregated all that queer *mélange* of North African peoples: nomads and Arabs of the desert; half-bred, blue-eyed men of the coast; the delicately featured Kabyles; Moroccans; some Spahis; a negro or two, black as night; and even Makhazni from the interior, who are at home wherever their horse and saddle may be. All these and more—the whole gamut of the cosmopolitan population of the Mediterranean—are here.

In the Moorish cafés and the "Black Tents" alike, Makhazni and Spahis play the Spanish "ronda" or dominoes with all the devotion of lovers of sedentary amusements elsewhere.

The Spahi and the negro will play together all day and half the night, shuffling the cards and juggling the dominoes, and only a savage grunt, or cry, periodically breaks their silence. Their emotions are mostly expressed by indeterminable, leery grins.

Night falls, and one street alone in Biskra retains the activities and life of the daytime. It is the street of cafés, where, behind closed doors, dance the Ouleds-Naïls for the delectation of the Arab, the profit of the patron, and for the curious from overseas to speculate upon.

The performance of the Moorish cafés of Biskra, Constantine, and Tunis are amusing and instructive, if not

edifying, no doubt. But those who expect the conventional "musical evening" will be disappointed. Painted sequin-bedecked women depend more upon their physical charms to appeal to the Arab *bourgeoisie* and the Zouaves, Spahis and Turcos, who mostly make up their audiences, than to the rhythm of the accompanying orchestra, which many a time is drowned out by the free and easy uproar.

The music of the *indigènes* may be soothing, but one must be an *indigène* to feel that way about it. There is nothing very soothing to the Anglo-Saxon about the incessant beating of a tambourine, or the prolonged shrill squeak of a reed pipe, the combination made hideous by the persistent whining of the renegade desert Arab who "bosses the job," the only occupation at which he can work while sitting down and drinking coffee for twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four. His profits must all go for coffee. A hundred cups a day and as many more in a night does not seem to jaundice his eye or dull his energies, such as they are. Coffee and tobacco—of any old kind—will keep an Arab musician going, whereas a Spaniard with a guitar, an Italian with a mandolin, or a German with a trombone, would want some solid food and alcoholic refreshment as well. From this one gathers that the Arab is temperate; and he is in most things, except coffee, cigarettes, and music.

If one is a serious, thorough, vagabond traveller, and would study the Ouled-Naïls and their histories, all well and good; there's something in it. But if one goes to prowling around Biskra's Rue Sainte merely for adventure, he is liable to get it, and of a costly kind, and he will learn nothing about the Ouled-Naïls from an ethnological point of view. The sentimental writers have drawn altogether too sentimental a picture of this plague-spot. In truth the Ouled-Naïls are a race of girls and women quite apart from those other Algerian tribes. They come to Biskra, to Constantine, and to Algiers, and live the lives of other free-

and-easy women of the world. They dance in the Moorish cafés for the delectation of Arabs, Turks, and strangers, and they carry on a considerably less moral traffic as well, gaining *sous*, *francs*, and *louis* meanwhile. When she has enough golden sequins to link together in a kind of a *cuirasse*, which hangs from her velvet brown neck down over her chest in an amulet half a yard square, the Ouled-Naïl *danseuse* retires from business. She goes back to her tribe in the southwest, becomes virtuous, makes some Arab sheep-herder or camel-trader happy, and raises a family, the girls of which in time go through the same proceedings. The game is an hereditary one, and it is played desperately and, apparently, with less ill effects than one would suppose. For the women are accredited as living moral lives ever after,—once they get back to their homes. It is the contact with civilization, or semicivilization, which does them harm.

The Casino at Biskra offers as one of its attractions the sight of these dancing women of the Ouled-Naïls without the necessity of contaminating oneself by going down into their quarter and seeing the real thing. The contamination is just as great in the gilded halls of the Casino as in some dingy, smoky *café maure*, but the local colour is wanting.

The excursions to be made from Biskra are not as many, nor so enjoyable, as those from El Kantara. The round of Old Biskra and its villages is readily made on foot or by carriages; and one may even continue farther afield to the sandy, wavy dunes of the desert, and to the "Fontaine Chaude," or to the Shrine of Sidi-Okba, twenty kilometres out over the camel trail of the open desert. This excursion to Sidi-Okba is classic.

Sidi-Okba sits in the midst of a fine oasis of some seventy thousand date-growing palms. It is a miserable, unlovely enough little village, but the memory of the Arab conqueror, Okba-ben-Nofi, has made it famous.

"You will find nothing to eat at Sidi-Okba," say the

guide-books. “You must carry your provisions.” It all depends on what you want to eat. If it is simple refreshment only, you will find it here at Sidi-Okba—the tomb of the founder of Kairouan—in a veritable *guinguette* such as one sees in suburban Paris, with arbours, trellised vines, and glittering coloured balls of glass suspended from the trees. It is a little bit of transplanted France, dull, tawdry, and uninteresting enough. But still, there it is,—a café-restaurant sitting tight in a little Arab village, before the tomb of the great Sidi-Okba, which attracts pilgrims all through the year from among the Mussulman population of all North Africa. The mosque, where repose the sainted man’s remains, is the most ancient monument of Islam in Algeria.

The tomb, the mosque, the Medersa, or Arab school, and the afore-mentioned *guinguette*, are all there are at Sidi-Okba; but it should be omitted from no man’s, or woman’s, itinerary in these parts.

Back again over the same route one gains Biskra after a hard day’s round *en voiture*, or on the back of a donkey, or a mulet, as he chooses. The only things you see *en route* are an occasional solitary *gourbi*; a mud hut or two; or perhaps a simple tomb or *kouba* rising away in the distance,—a white silhouette against a background of yellow sand and blue sky.

These little punctuating notes dot the landscape all through Tunisia and Algeria. Frequently you will find scattered about the *kouba* numerous detached tombs, still distinguishable, though half buried in the sand. These detached shrines and cemeteries, often half submerged in great waves of sand, are met with on the outskirts of nearly all Algerian towns and cities; and one is no more surprised at coming upon one beside the road than he is at the sight of a kilometre stone.

Southwest from Biskra is the region of the Ziban, a zone of steppes, planted here and there with verdant oases.

Topographically the features of the Ziban are mountainous, though ranges of the Zab slope and taper off imperceptibly into the dunes of the desert.

The inhabitants of the Ziban are of a race differing considerably from the Kabyle and the Arab, favouring the former more than the latter. The plaited hair of the women, their general barbaric love of jewelry and personal adornment, their complexion, their chains, bracelets, and collarettes all point to the fact that they are an immigrant race, the development of a stock originally brought from afar, and not descended from the desert nomad.

Throughout Algeria the nomad Arab is he who comes from the Sahara and its closer confines during the summer, returning with his herds in the winter to the desert, or to the great tents of his father's tribe. The Arab peasant, or labourer, is a native of the Tell region, and is manifestly not of the same purity of type as the desert Arab who speaks the pure idiom of the Koran. The Kabyle is another race apart. The distinctive characteristics of the three peoples are easily recognized when you are once familiar with them.

Bordering upon the Monts du Zab (the Ziban) are the Monts des Ouled-Naïls, the home of the curiously distinct tribe before mentioned, who are more like degenerate Kabyles than they are like the desert Arab tribes.

Still farther in the southwest is a sad, gloomy land, half desert and half mountain, not wholly Saharan, and yet not wholly Algerian, either in topographical characteristics or in the characteristics of its people. It is the region of the M'zabs, wild savage children of an uncivilized land, fanatically religious and veritable *débauchés*,—which the Berber tribes are not. Their houses are poor, but their purses are well lined, and, since France has taken over Algeria, they are also French, though they might be Martians for all they resemble the French.

"It takes five Arabs to get the best of an Algerian Jew," says a proverb of the Sud, "and five Jews to master a M'zabite." In origin the people are supposed to be a mixture of the ancient Phœnicians and Numidians. Members of the tribe swarm all over Algeria, and are found even in Marseilles, as ambulant merchants, but they invariably return to their native land, for, it seems, it is a tenet of their religion not to remain away more than two years.

Among them are four orthodox sects of Mussulmans, and still another peculiar to themselves, whose chief characteristic seems to consist of interminable praying; whereas the conventional Mohammedan is contented with exhorting his God five times a day.

Their towns rank as veritable holy cities in their creed, with Ghardaïa as the capital. The satellite *villes saintes* are Melika, Ben-Izguen, Bou Noura, El Ateuf, Beryan, and Guerrara. In all their population numbers between thirty and forty thousand.

The general aspect of the land is one of melancholy, because of the numbers of their burial-grounds, three or four surrounding each town. The cemeteries are "places of prayer" with the M'zabites, and their population of weeping, wailing, praying faithful is always numerically greater than the dead. When the M'zabite is not selling something he is praying.

Quite the most varied ethnographic and topographic changes to be observed in North Africa are those south of Biskra, within the limits of El Kantara on the north and Oued-Souf in the south.

The religious tribes and sects are numerous, each having its own supplementary creeds and customs; the Ziban differing from those of the Ramaya, the Zogga, the Sidi-Okba, and the Oued B'hir. Still other oases passed *en route* have their *zaouyas* or brotherhoods of professing

coreligionists, not differing greatly from each other in general principles, but still possessed of variants as wide apart as the Methodists and Universalists of the Christian world.

Throughout all this region the marabouts, or holy men, are most hospitable, and are as appreciative of little attentions—gifts of chocolate, of candles, or even matches—as could possibly be imagined. In many cases they are veritable hermits, whose only intercourse with the outside world is with passing strangers,—who are few.

CHAPTER XXI

IN THE WAKE OF THE ROMAN

THE path of the Roman through North Africa was widely strewn with civic and military monuments as grand as any of the same class elsewhere in the Western Empire.

One comes to associate the ancient Roman with Gaul, and is no longer surprised when he contemplates the wonderful arenas of Arles and Nîmes or the arch and the theatre at Orange. Pompeii and Herculaneum are classic memories of our school-time days, and we think it nothing strange that their ruins exist to-day. When, however, we view the vast expanse of vertical marbles at Timgad in Algeria's plateau of the Tell, the Prætorium at Lambessa, the great Roman Arch at Tebessa, the amphitheatre at Djemel, or the ruined portal of Dougga, it all comes so suddenly upon us that we wonder what nature of a hodge-podge dream we are living in.

The effect is further heightened when one sees a caravan of camels, horses, and donkeys, and its accompanying men and women of the desert, camped beside some noble Roman arch or tomb standing alone above the desert plain. It is not alone, of course. There are other neighbouring

remains buried round about, or there are still fragments that serve some neighbouring settlement as a quarry from which to draw blocks of stone to build anew, as did the builders of certain Italian cathedrals draw some of their finest marbles from the ruins of old Carthage.

All North Africa is very rich in Roman ruins, and the Arabs are as interested in these antique remains as are the whitest, longest-bearded archæologists that ever lived. It is not their love of antiquity that accounts for this, but the possibility of getting information which will lead to treasure. Most of these North African Roman ruins were despoiled of all articles of value by the ancestors of the present Arabs long before the antiquarians took it into their heads to exploit them; but the traditional game still goes on.

The Arab of Algeria to-day still looks forward to the time when he may yet discover a vast buried treasure. Perhaps he may! Who knows? Tradition and legend all but definitely locate many buried hoards which have not yet been touched, and any grotto or cavern miraculously or accidentally discovered may prove a veritable gold mine. The Arab thinks that this is as sure to happen to him as for the clock to strike twelve on the eve of the Jour des Rameaux. And that he will tumble on all fours into the midst of a cavern paved and walled with gold, pearls, and precious stones.

From Tlemcen on the west (the ancient Pomaria of the Romans, and an important Roman camp) to Tozeur in the Sud-Tunisien (the site of the still more ancient Thusuros) is one long, though more or less loosely connected, chain of relics of the Roman occupation.

At Cherchell are vestiges of an antique Roman port; at Tipaza various civic monuments; and not far distant the enigmatic “Tombeau de la Chrétienne.” On the coast, to the east of Algiers, is Stora, a port of antiquity, and Bona (the ancient Hippo-Regius), where the tourist to-day

divides his attentions between the commonplace basilica erected to Saint Augustin, who was bishop of Hippo-Regius in the fourth century, and the tomb of the Marabout Sidi-Brahmin, with the balance of appeal in favour of the latter simple shrine. Modern Christian architecture often descends to base, unfeeling garishness, whereas the savage



The Kasba, Bona

simplicity of the exotic races often produces something on similar lines, but in a great deal better taste. Here is where the onyx and marble basilica at Bona, albeit one of Christendom's great shrines, loses by comparison with the simple *kouba* of the Mohammedan holy man.

On the route from Bona to Hippo-Regius (to-day Hippone) is a restored Roman bridge, so restored indeed that it has lost all semblance of antiquity, but still it is there to marvel at.

"*Bône la belle!*" the French fondly call the antique city. Bona of to-day is beautiful as modern cities go, but it is so modern with its *quais*, its promenades, its esplanade, and its pompous Hôtel de l'Orient, that one loves it for nothing but its past. The *Kasba*, the military headquarters on the edge of the town by the shore, piles up skyward in imposing fortress-fashion and is the chief architecturally interesting monument of the town itself.

Eastward from Bona, eighty kilometres or so along the coast, is La Calle, another port of antiquity, the Tunizia of the Romans, and one of the old French trading-posts on the Barbary coast. There are few ancient remains at La Calle to-day, but it is one of the most interesting of all the Algerian coast towns all the same.

La Calle would be worthy of exploitation as a tourist resort if one could only get to it comfortably as it lies half hidden just to the westward of the Bastion de France and hemmed in on the south by the Khoumir region. The road from Bona to La Calle is the worst in Algeria, and the light railway is very poor. La Calle has become the centre of the world's coral fishery since the Italians have worked out their own beds. Out of about 5,000 Europeans, La Calle has quite half of its population made up of sunny Neapolitans and Sicilians, whose chief delight is to dive into deep water and bring up coral, or dig a cutting for a canal or railway. Wherever there is a job of this kind on hand, the Italian is the man to do it.

The town is very ancient, and its name is derived from the word meaning dock, or *cale*, hence it is not difficult to trace its origin back to a great seaport of history. Its commerce has been exploited since 1560 by Marseillais merchants; but in spite of this it is to-day more Italian than French.

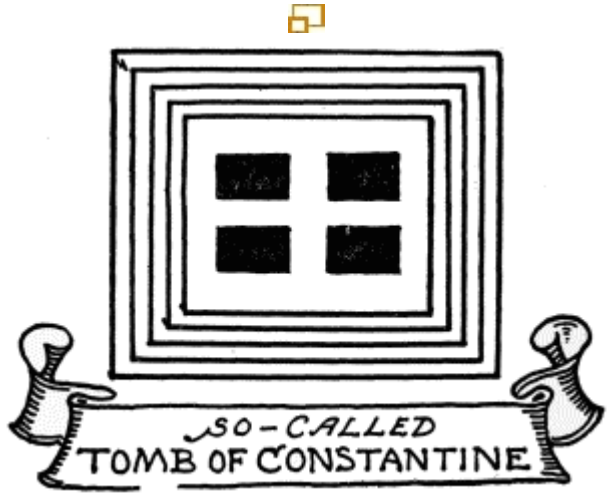
The coral industry is still great, but here, too, the supply is on the wane. It has been fashionable for too long a time, in spite of the traffic in pink celluloid and porcelain, which furnishes most of the "coral" to kitchen maids and *midinettes*.

With the falling off of the coral industry, the sardine fishery has developed, and now the little fishes boiled in oil, the universally popular *hors d'œuvre*, are as likely to have come from the harbour of La Calle as the Bay of Douarnenez. They are not so good as the latter variety (though as a fact the sardine is a Mediterranean fish, only caught in northern waters because it migrates there in summer), but they are a good deal better than the Nova Scotia or Norway sardines of commerce, which are not sardines at all.

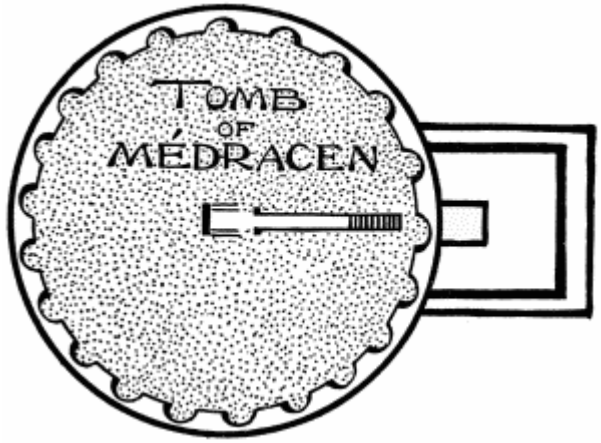
From the coast down into the interior Constantine, the Cirta of the ancients, looms large in the roll-call of antiquity. After the Numidian kings came Sittius with the backing of Cæsar, and the whole neighbouring region blossomed forth with prosperous and growing cities, Mileum (Mila), Chellu (Collo), and Rusicade (Philippeville). Among Cirta's famous men was Fronton, the preceptor of Marcus Aurelius. In the latter days of the Empire and under Byzantine domination, Cirta became the capital of a province, as is the Constantine of to-day.

Constantine's Roman remains are not many to-day. Those of the great bridge across the Gorge of the Rummel are the principal ones. Various antique constructive elements are readily traced, but the present bridge swings out boldly away from the old stone piers, leaving the

Roman bridge an actual ruin and nothing more. Its keystone did not fall until 1858, though probably the actual arch of that time only dated from the century before, as great works of restoration, perhaps indeed of entire reconstruction, were then undertaken by Salah-Bey.



Near Constantine, on the road to Kroubs, is the absurdly named Tomb of Constantine, absurdly named because this Græco-Punic monument could never have been the tomb of Constantine from its very constructive details, which so plainly mark its epoch. It is nevertheless a very beautiful structure,—what there is left of it. Moreover it is a mausoleum of some sort, though the natives call it simply *souma* or tower.



Its ground-plan and its silhouette are alike passing strange, though plain and simple to a degree.

Another tomb in this province which is one of the relics of antiquity (over which archæologists have raved and disputed since they got into competition by expressing their views and printing books about them) is the tomb of Médracen or Madghasen, on the road from Constantine to Batna.

It is a great cone of wooden-looking blocks of stone, a sort of pyramidal cone, with a broad, flat base. At a distance it looks like a combination of Fingal's Cave and the Pyramid of Cheops.

Supposedly this was a royal mausoleum, the burial-place of Médracen. The entrance to this really remarkable monument was discovered in 1850, but only recently has its ground-plan been made public by those secretive antiquarians who sometimes do not choose to give their information broadcast.

El Bekri, the Arab writer of the eleventh century, wrote something about this monument which, being rediscovered in later centuries, led to investigations which unearthed a monument according to the above plan.

In the interior of the Constantinois, between Constantine and Biskra, in the midst of that wonderfully fertile plateau of the Tell, are three magnificently interesting Roman cities, Lambessa, Timgad, and Tebessa. They are only to be reached from Batna by diligence, by hired carriage, or by automobile,—if one has one, and cares to take chances on getting through, for of course there are no supplies to be had *en route*. The distance from Batna to Tebessa—where one is again in touch with the railway, a branch leading to the Bona-Guelma line at Souk-Ahras—is about a hundred and eighty kilometres.

A placid contemplation of one or all of the cities making up this magnificent collection of Roman ruins in the heart of Africa will give one emotions that hitherto he knew naught of.

Batna itself is not a tourist point, though an interesting enough place to observe the native as he mingles with the military and the European civilization. "Batna-la-bivouac" the city is called, because of the great military post here. It is not a dead city, but a sleeping one. At its very gates rises the conical tomb of the Numidian king, Massinissa. Just before Batna is reached by the railway, coming from El Guerrah, is Seriana, so known to the Arabs, though the French have recently renamed it Pasteur, after the illustrious chemist. The site is that of the ancient Lamiggiga. A dozen kilometres or more out into the plateau lands to the northwest is Zana, the ancient city of Diana. Here still exist two great triumphal arches, one of a single bay and the other of three, the latter constructed by the Emperor Macrin in 217 A.D. A temple to Diana formerly here has disappeared, but before its emplacement is a great monumental gateway still in a very good state of preservation. There are also vestiges of a Byzantine fortress.

From Batna to Lambessa, on the road to Timgad, is a dozen kilometres. The ruins of the Lambæsis of the

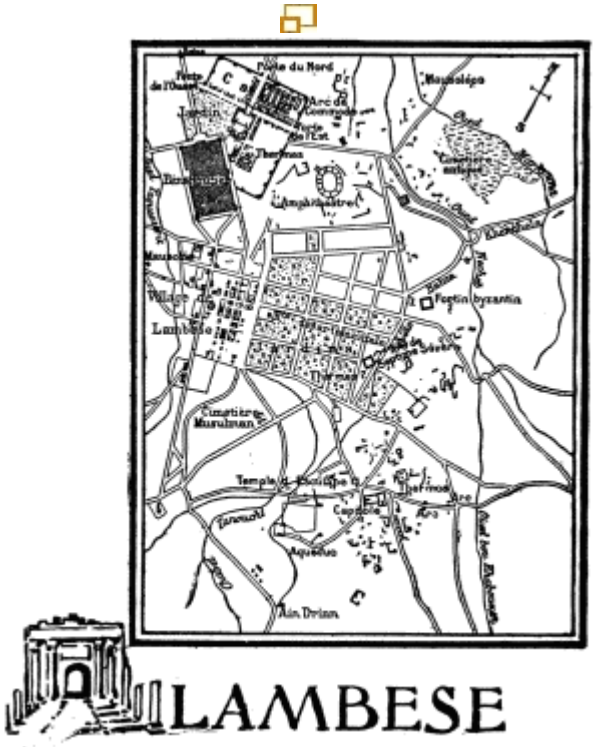
Romans are of enormous extent, even those so far uncovered to view, and much more remains to be excavated.

The Third Legion of Augustus, charged with the defence of North Africa, here made their camp in the beginning of the second century of our era, and the outlines of this camp are to-day well defined.

Of the monumental remains, the Prætorium is a vast quadrangular structure in rosy-red stone most imposingly beautiful. The forum is plainly marked, and near by are the baths, with their heating-furnaces yet visible; and the ruined arcades of an amphitheatre crop up through the thin soil in a surprising manner. The eastern and western gateways of this vast military camp are still more than fragmentary in silhouette and outline.



Lambessa and Its Ruines



Farther on is a great three-bayed arch built under Septimus Severus and a pagan temple to Esculapius. The Capitol, in its ground-plan, and with respect to a great part of its walls, stands proud and magnificent as of yore. It was dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. The ruins of a Roman aqueduct lie to the south of the Capitol.

To the north, a matter of four kilometres or so, is a pyramidal tomb to Flavius Maximus, Prefect of the Third Augustan Legion.

Close beside all this buried treasure is the great government penitentiary. Two thousand Turk, Jew, and Arab thieves and murderers are there shut up; when they

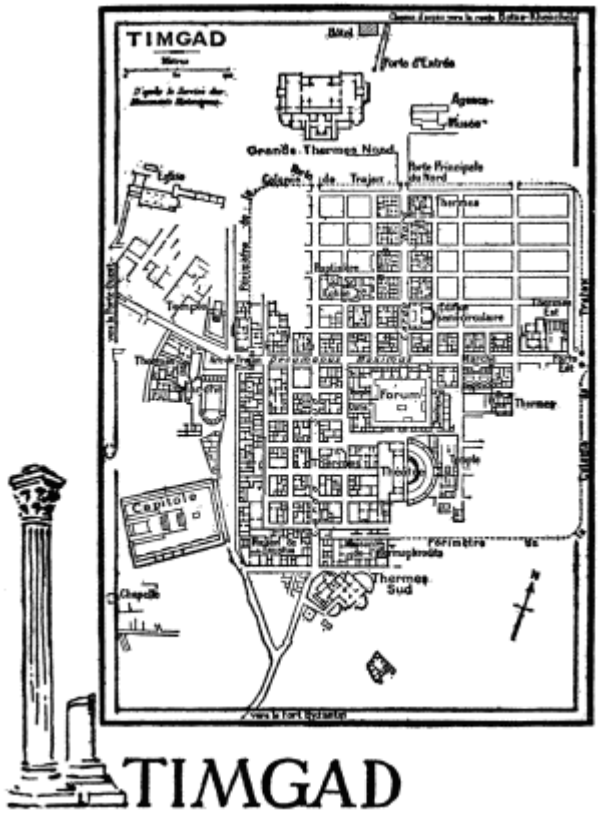
want exercise, they are given a pick and shovel and set to work as one of the "outside contingent," digging away the débris of ages from these magnificent Roman ruins. This is the sort of criminal labour which doesn't affect competition. The *forçats* of Algeria accomplish some good in life after all.

Timgad is twenty-five kilometres beyond Lambessa, and, though only the site of a ruined Roman city, founded under the Emperor Trajan, has hotel accommodation of a very acceptable, if not luxurious, kind (Hotel Meille).

One should take a guide, once arrived at Timgad, to save time, otherwise he may worry it all out with the map herewith.

Sidi Hassin, our guide at Timgad, was a man of medium size, young, thin and muscular, with an incipient scraggy beard. He was dressed modestly and even becomingly, for he





had not mingled Manchester goods with his *haïk* and burnous woven in some Kabyle village. On his head was a little round turban, and his sandals were laced with leather thongs. He was decidedly a home-made product. His compressed visage bespoke energy and intelligence, and a little mocking laugh, a sort of audible smile, was ever on his lips, in strong contrast to the melancholic indifference of the average Arab.

Sidi Hassin seemed the right sort of a philosopher and friend for our journey around Timgad, so we took him as soon as he offered his services. His recommendation for

the job was, in his own words, as follows:

"*Tu es sous le doigt de Dieu et sous le mien! Je réponds de toi. Tu reviendras sain et sauf.*"

Thamugadi was founded by Trajan in the year 100 A.D., the actual labour being the work of the soldiers of the Third Legion, then encamped at Lambessa. Thamugadi, a *foyer* of Roman civilization in a still barbarous land, was of great importance and wealth. It lived in security and prosperity until the early part of the sixth century, when it was destroyed by the Berbers.

More luxuriously disposed even than Lambessa, Timgad presents the very ideal of a ruined Roman city. It had not, perhaps, the wealth of Pompeii, and it had not Pompeii's wonderful background of Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples, but it was more ample and more splendid in its arrangements than any other ruined Roman city left for tourists to marvel at to-day.

The French "Service des Monuments Historiques" began excavating Timgad's ruins in 1881, and now one is able to locate with accuracy the various civic and military structures. These cover such a large territory that the city must ever take rank as one of the most interesting ruins unearthed to this date.

The ground-plan here given explains it all precisely, and the reader is referred to the "Guide Illustré de Timgad," on sale at the Hotel Meille, for detailed descriptions which cannot be elaborated here.

A Byzantine fortress, built under Justinian in the sixth century, is also here. It was an outpost or defence which guarded the pass through the rock wall of the Aures, from the high plateau of Numidia to the Lybian Desert to the south. Its thick walls, two metres or more, are still flanked by eight towers.

From Timgad to Kenchela is some seventy kilometres, and is covered by diligence once a day, the journey taking

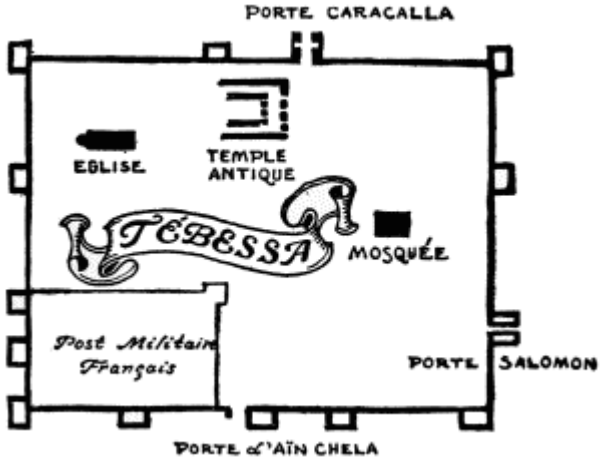
twelve hours and costs ten francs. You pass several *foums*, or springs, and cross several *oueds* or river-beds on the way, and finally, after a steep climb, you reach Kenchela, built upon the site of the ancient Mascula, one of the contemporaries of Lambæsis and Thamugadi.

To-day Kenchela has nothing for the tourist but its Hôtel de France, and its Monday market, which like other *indigène* markets is full of iridescent local colour and life. Near by, on the flank of the mountains, were Roman baths, known as the Aquæ Flavianæ, passed by on the road from Timgad. Two huge pools, one round and the other square, are all that remain to-day.

To reach Tebessa from Kenchela one may take the railway to Ain-Beïda,—a matter of fifty kilometres. There are no ruins *en route* except at Ksar-Baghai, a great Byzantine fortress built by Justinian. Its square donjon and round towers look like those of the feudal strongholds of Europe. They are not the least African.

From Ain-Beïda to Tebessa is another eighty-eight kilometres of well-laid modern roadway. It is covered by a daily diligence in ten hours, at a cost of fifteen francs.

Tebessa is a worthy rival of Lambessa and Timgad. Its ruins are many to-day. The most notable ones are Caracalla's Arch of Triumph, a temple of the same epoch (the beginning of the third century of our era), and innumerable finds preserved in the local museum. The great arch is a stupendous and very beautiful work, and the temple worthy to rank with the Maison Carrée at Nîmes, the svelt proportions and marble Corinthian columns of which are its chief features.



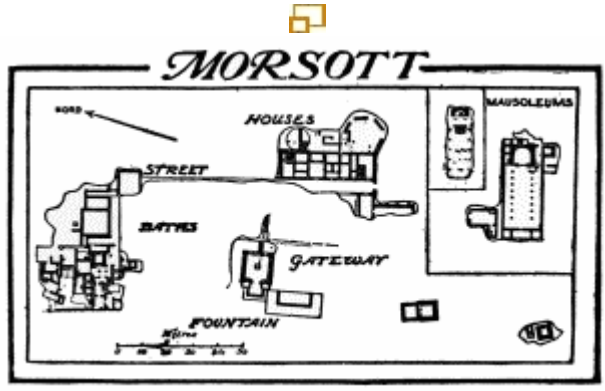
The present city of Tebessa sits in the midst of a vast expanse scattered with Roman ruins and surrounded by the still existing Byzantine walls built by one Salomon, a general of the Legion of Justinian.

These walls have stood for thirteen centuries, restored from time to time, until now, with the coming of the French, the aspect of the modern walled city has the disposition given above. Fourteen rectangular towers, including the massive fortress-gate of Caracalla, add considerably to the value of the defences.

Not only at Tebessa, but all around for a radius of twenty-five kilometres, the ground is strewn with old Roman and Byzantine relics; notably at Morsott, where has recently been unearthed the site of the ancient Theverte of the Romans. It is entirely a new discovery, and what great finds may ultimately be brought to light, no one as yet can conjecture.

Two basilicas have already been brought to the surface, two isolated mausoleums, a vast monumental gateway, a drinking-fountain of astonishing proportions, baths, and many beautiful and practically undefiled mosaics.

These ruins are scattered over an area of seven thousand square metres, and, almost without exception, their preservation is in such a condition that, so far as outlines are concerned, one is able to construct anew what must have been a very important centre of Roman civilization. This group of neighbouring Roman towns and cities of the past, beginning with Tebessa and ending with Lambessa, form perhaps the most curious and extensive area of Roman ruins to be found to-day within a like radius.



The first exploration of the ruins of Morsott was through the means of the "Société Archéologique" of Constantine, but the French government has stepped in and claimed them for its own and classed them as "Monuments Historiques," which means that no more will strangers be able to lug away with them as excess baggage a Roman capital, to be used as a garden seat at home. This is right and proper, the most passionate collector will admit.

CHAPTER XXII

TUNIS AND THE SOUKS

"A travers la douceur de tes jeunes jardins
Je m'avance vers toi, Tunis, ville étrangère.
Je te vois du haut des gradins
De ta colline d'herbe et de palmes légères."

By sea one approaches Tunis through the canal which runs from La Goulette to the *quais* and docks in the new town of Tunis; and one pays the company which exploits the harbour works four francs for the privilege. It's progress if you like, but it's about the most expensive half a dozen miles of travel by water that exists in all the known world.

By land one arrives by railway, and is mulcted a similar amount by some red-fezzed, nut-brown Arab for pointing out the way to your hotel. The *porteurs*, *portefaix*, and *faccini* who carry your luggage at Tunis are most importunate. If they happen to tumble your trunk overboard, they still strike you for their pay. You say: "*Pourquoi vous donnerais-je?*" And the answer is: "*Parceque c'est moi qui a perdu votre malle.*" Moral, travel light. You take your choice, it's only four francs either way. And truly it is worth it, for there is nothing, short of Constantinople or Cairo, as Oriental as old Tunis, the Tunis of the *souks*, of the mosques, and minarets. The other Tunis, that one down by the docks, and the new-made land lying before the Arab quarter, is as conventionally twentieth-century as Paris or New York. It is very up to date (a sign of prosperity and progress), and that's what the French and native government officials are working for. Tunis is the coming land of exploitation, a little corner of the globe as rich in the products of nature, mines and fruits and vegetables, as any other wherever found.

The Lake of Tunis is no longer seething with the variegated commerce of old; things are more prosaic with steam than with sail, but to pass through her sea-gate is to be surrounded by the people of the Bible, the Arabian

Nights, and the Alhambra of the days of the Moors. Tunis is the veritable gate of Eastern life, of the life of Haroun-Al-Rachid. The European city by the harbour is of to-day. The walled native city is almost unconscious of the existence of modern Europe. It is the most interesting tourist resort of North Africa, more so than Algiers by far, with its *souks*, its proximity to Carthage, and its Orientalism.

Tunis is a city of consulates. Not all of them have business to transact, but still they are there, the consulates of all nations under the sun. "Do you have many of your country people to look after?" the writer interrogated of one accredited from a South American government, a German, by the way, whom he met in a Tunis café. He replied: "But there are none of my government's people here; they neither live here, trade here, nor pass through as tourists, as do the English and Americans." "What then do you do?" he was asked. "I correspond with my government." "Well, why not be frank about it, that is what most consuls and consulates do!" The expatriate who wants help or even information from his government's representative is usually met by some underling, who at once begins edging him toward the door and says guilelessly: "This office has no information on that subject," or, "I really don't know myself; you'll have to see the consul, but just at present...."

These receptions are stupefying in their asininity, but they come to pass in most consulates, and those at Tunis are no exception.

Tunis' Arab town is less spoilt by the encroachment of outside influences than that of Algiers. Day or night, it is a wonderful chapter from the "Arabian Nights" that one lives, as he strolls aimlessly up one narrow, twisting *ruelle* and down another. Here is a great towering minaret of a mosque which seemingly does business at all hours, and there is a synagogue which has Saturday for a busy day.

The perfume-sellers of the Souk des Parfums are Mohammedans, and intersperse religion with business; the saddle-makers, jewellers, and leather-workers are often Jews, and attend strictly to business for six days in the week and shut up shop on Saturday, make their necessary devotions quickly and stand around on their door-sills the rest of the day dressed in their holiday clothes. All castes and creeds are here, from the Italian chestnut-vendor to the Jew old-clo' dealer, and from the desert nomad horse-dealer to the town-bred Arab who wears a silk burnous and carries a cane.

The *souks* or bazaars of Tunis are the chief delight of the stranger, and certainly no such "shopping" can be done elsewhere as here; no, not even at Cairo, for, after all, Tunis is "less spoiled" than Cairo, though even here the stranger is a fair mark for the Arab trader, who augments his price a hundred per cent. You must bargain with the Oriental, be he Arab, Turk, Jew, Hindu, Chinaman, or Japanese, and the further east you go, the more the necessity for bargaining.

One of the pleasantest features of travel for many, no doubt, is visiting the shops. Travellers should, however, exercise judgment and discrimination, and should take a little trouble to ascertain what are the genuine specialties of the place. "*Articles de touriste*" should at all times be avoided; nine cases out of ten they are made to sell. At Tunis, as at Cairo or Constantinople, one is painfully at the mercy of his guide, who, if he can, takes him to the large shops, which, as a rule, deal mainly in pseudo-curios, or articles manufactured solely for strangers. These are invariably the shops where the enterprising shopkeepers pay the guides the largest commission. No doubt the farce of solemnly presenting coffee to the purchaser, a custom which the tourist has been told by his guide-book to expect, is effective "playing-up," but the innocent stranger may rest assured that while he is thus literally imbibing the

Oriental atmosphere, he will pay for it as well in the bill. He may not notice it, but it is there.



In the Bazaars, Tunis

The most characteristic finds to be had in Tunis to-day are the fine old mirrors, made at Genoa and Florence for wealthy Turks and Arabs of a hundred or two years ago; *moucharabias*, stolen from some Moorish house; the thousand and one decorations of tile and baked clay which are unmistakable as to their genuineness; and good Kabyle silver jewelry. There are one or two shops in the European quarter where one can be confident he is getting the real thing, and where they sell it by weight, at two hundred francs a kilo.

In another category, more or less tawdry to be sure, but ever fascinating to the stranger, are such things as stuffed

lizards, gazelles' horns and skins, panther and jackal skins, curious engraved boxes covered with camel-skin, negro tom-toms, castanets, amulets, and pottery, Arab knives, daggers and muskets, Morocco slippers, saddle-bags and purses, Touareg weapons and leather goods, ostrich eggs and feathers, copper bowls and ornaments.

Perhaps the above suggestions will seem prosaic and matter-of-fact to the sentimental traveller, to whom the very word bazaar offers a suggestion of romantic adventure, to say nothing of the possibility of real "discoveries." But in places of tourist resort bargaining is no longer conducted after the stately fashion of the "Arabian Nights," when the purchase of a brass tray or an embroidered saddle-cloth was a solemn treaty, and the bargain for a lamp a diplomatic event, not to be lightly undertaken or hurriedly concluded. To-day it is simply a businesslike transaction in which the golden rule plays a no more prominent part than it does in Chicago's wheat-pit. There is the coffee-drinking left, to be sure, but that is only part of the game.

The foreign element has made astonishing inroads into the trade of Tunis, and the Italian, the Greek, the Maltese, and the Jew are everywhere working at everything. The Jew, more than any other race, has made the greatest progress, as the following tale, or legend, if it be not entirely a veracious tale, will show.

A Jew of Tunis a couple of centuries ago commissioned a French merchant to order for him a cargo of black hats, green shawls and red silk stockings. When, however, the goods arrived, the Jew repudiated the order. Haled before the Bey, who in those days administered justice himself, the Jew denied not only the order, but also all knowledge of the French merchant. "Where are your witnesses?" asked the Bey of the Frenchman. "I have none, Sire," he replied, "not even a line of writing. The order was given me verbally by the Jew." "Then," decided the Bey, "as it is

only oath against oath, I cannot pronounce judgment in your favour." The Frenchman walked sadly away, knowing that this meant to him absolute ruin. Hardly had he reached his home, when he was amazed and alarmed by a great tumult in the streets. Hurrying out to ascertain its cause, he found a vast crowd, mostly Jews, following one of the Beylical *entourage*, who was making the following proclamation: "Every Jew who, within twenty-four hours after the issue of this proclamation, shall be found in any street of Tunis without a black beaver hat on his head, a green shawl round his shoulders, and silk stockings on his legs, shall be forthwith seized and conveyed to the first court of our palace, where he will be publicly flogged to death." Within an hour the French merchant's shop was besieged by Jews eager to pay him any price he chose to ask for his derelict cargo of black hats, green shawls and red silk stockings.

If the foregoing tale proves anything, it proves hatred of the Jews and love for the French, and if that state of affairs does not exist to its fullest extent in Tunis to-day, every competent observer can but remark that the Tunisian, be he Jew or Berber, under combined French and Beylical rule is very well cared for indeed.

The life of Tunis is, as might be supposed, very mixed. A Tunisian Arab will sometimes marry a European, though not often; but never a Jewess. There is a tale of a certain Arab shopkeeper of the Souk d'Etoffes who married a stranger from overseas. How the tryst was carried on is not stated, but married they were, and of course everybody was shocked; not because it was everybody's business, but because it was nobody's business.

"Does she really love him?" asked the ladies around the tea-tables at the Tunisia Palace Hotel when the tale was recounted.

"Well, they look happy," said the discoverer of the *ménage*, "and joy lasts seven days, or seven years, they

say."

"It makes me just sick," said a new-made bride, doing her honeymoon in the Mediterranean.

"How long has she been married?" asked another; this time a spinster.

"Oh, about two years, and they tell me she gets thinner and thinner each year. It's the case of oil and water,—the East and the West,—they can't mix."

This was only gossip, of course, but it was a sign of the times.

The population of Tunis is the most interesting of all nations under the sun, particularly of a spring or autumn evening as it sits on the broad terrace of one of the boulevard cafés, well dressed and gay, and the Arab the gayest of them all. The Arab of Tunis, when he arrives to a certain distinction, dresses in robes of silk, and silk stockings, too, which he holds up over his bare calves with a "Boston garter," or a very good imitation thereof. Certainly an Arab whose burnous, *haïk*, *gandurah*, *caftan*, socks, and garters are silk must be a "personage."

A curious thing to be remarked in the cafés of Tunis is the avidity with which the exiled French population devours the Paris papers upon the arrival of the mail-boat. Another curious thing is the fact that the newsboys sell them in twos and threes; there not being a mail every day, they arrive in bunches of two, three, and sometimes four. One glances at the last one first, but reads it last, at least most people do it that way. It's human nature.

Throughout Tunis' Arab quarter the wide-spread hand of Fatmah as a sign of good luck is seen everywhere. It may be stencilled on some shop window, painted over the chimney in a Moorish café, or even stained upon the flank of a horse or donkey. The *main de Fatmah* is the "good-luck" charm of the Arab, and, as a souvenir to be carried away by the stranger, in the form of a bangle or watch-

charm, is about the most satisfactory and characteristic thing that can be had.

After the *souks*, the palaces and mosques are of chief interest to the traveller. One may not enter the mosques—the French authorities hold the temple of the Mussulman's God inviolate; but the Dar el Bey and the Bardo, the chief administrative buildings of the native government, may be checked off the indefatigable tourist's list of "things to see;" as have been Bunker Hill Monument, the Paris Morgue, and Ellen Terry's cottage at Winchelsea, for presumably these have been "done" first. Such is the craze for seeing sights without knowing what they all mean. "Is it old?" "Does the King, Prince, Bey, or Sultan really live there?" "And are the blood-spots real?" are fair representatives of





the class of information which most conventional tourists demand.

The great gates of the inner Arab city of Tunis are most fascinating, with their swarming hordes of passers-by and their grim battlemented walls and towers. The new boulevarded streets circle the old town, and an electric tramway runs in either direction from the Port de France back again to the Port de France. Outside, all is twentieth-century; within, all is a couple of hundred years behind the times at least.

High up above all, behind the Dar el Bey and overlooking the roof-tops of the *souks* and the town below, is the Kasba and the quaintly decorated minaret of its mosque, the oldest in Tunis, and quite the finest of all the decorative minarets of the world of Islam.

Other mosque minarets at Tunis are svelt and beautiful, dainty and more or less ornate, but they lack the massive luxuriance of that of the Kasba, which was the work, be it recalled, of Italian infidels, not of Mussulman faithful.

Within the charmed circle of the outer boulevards Tunis' Arab town has an appearance as archaic as one may expect to find in these progressive days. Veiled women are everywhere, and turbaned; high-coiffed, fat, wobbly Jewesses, and Sicilians and Maltese with poignards in their belts. It's a mixed crew indeed that makes up the life and movement of Tunis. This impression is heightened still further when you see the Bey drive by in state in a dingy carriage drawn by six black, silver-harnessed mules, the outriders yelling, "*Arri! Arri! Arri!*" like the donkey-boys of the more plebeian world. This sight is followed in the twinkling of an eye by a caravan of camels and nomads of the desert; then perhaps a couple of gaily painted Sicilian carts; an automobile of a very early vintage; another more modern (the *dernier cri*, in fact), and finally a troop of little *bourriquets*, grain-laden, making their way westward into the open country. This moving panorama, or another as varied, will pass you inside half an hour as you sit on the terrace of the café opposite the Residency.

At Bab Souika, just without the Arab town, and passed by the tram *en route* for the Kasba, is the centre of the popular animation of native life. In the Halfaouine quarter are the Moorish cafés, at Bab Djedid still another aspect of Arab loafing and idling, and all of it picturesque to the extreme.

The Jewish dancers of the cafés of the Place Sidi-Baian are recommended as "sights to be seen" by Baedeker and

Jouanne. These dancers have eyes like *merlans frits*, and the *ventre doré*, and are of the same variety that one has become accustomed to on the "Midway" and the "Pike," and in the "Streets of Cairo," which have made the rounds of recent expositions. They are no better nor no worse. The only difference is that here at Biskra, at Constantine, and at Tunis one sees things on their native heath.



Everything in the way of a ceremonial at Tunis centres around the Bey and the Resident-General. The Bey gives a function at the Bardo or at his palace at La Marsa, and the Governor-General attends. The Resident-General has a reception at the Residency, and the Bey drives up behind his six black mules, and, with the first interpreter of his palace, goes in and pays his respects to the representative of Republican France, the real ruler of the "Régence." "Bon jour"—"Au revoir," is about the extent of the conversation expected at such functions, and with these simple words said, the ceremony is over. But it is impressive while it lasts, with much gold lace, much bowing and scraping, much music and much helter-skeltering of the entourage here, there, and everywhere.

Republican France still holds out for ceremony, and the President's "Chasse Nationale" each year at Rambouillet is still reminiscent of "La Chasse Royale" of other days. Not so our bear-hunts in Louisiana cane-breaks. The Bey of Tunis is still the titular head of his people and their religion, but the hand that rules the destiny of his Régence is that of the representative of the French Republic.

CHAPTER XXIII

IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOSQUE

OLD Tunis fortunately remains old Tunis. It has not been spoiled, as has Algiers, in a way. Its crooked streets and culs-de-sac are still as they were when pachas kept their harems well filled as a matter of right, and not by the toleration of the French government.

Surrounding the vast spider's web of narrow streets of old Tunis is a circling line of tramway, within which is as Oriental an aspect as that of old (save the electric lights and the American sewing-machines, which are everywhere). Without this magic circle, all bustles with the cosmopolitan clamour which we fondly designate twentieth-century progress and profess to like: automobiles, phonographs, type-writing machines, railway trains, great hotels, cafés and restaurants, always the same wherever found.

There is quite as much life and movement in the *souks* of the old town of Tunis as on the boulevards of the European quarter, and it is quite as feverish, but with a difference. The perfume-makers of the Souk des Parfums still pound their leaves and blossoms by hand in a mortar, and the saddle and shoe makers still stitch and embroider by hand the gold-threaded arabesques of their ancestors. You can get all the products of the *souks*, of the made-in-Belgium variety, which look quite like the real thing, but in fact are but base "Dutch metal," unworthy of Arab, Turk, or Jew, and only fit for strangers. Here in the *souks* you must know how to "shop." In Tunis, more than in any other city along the Mediterranean, one must know how to sift the dross from the fine metal, and only too frequently the dealer himself will not give you the frank counsel that you need.

Just off the *Souk des Grains* is the "Street of the Pearls."

In this romantically named thoroughfare, and huddled close beneath the squat, mushroom domes of the Mosque of Sidi-Mahrez is a great brass-studded and bolted doorway, closing an entrance between two svelt marble columns, stolen from Carthage long ago by some unscrupulous Turk or Arab. Above is a great Moorish horseshoe arch. This is the sole entrance to a magnificent, typical Oriental establishment, built three hundred years since by some Turkish pacha fled from Constantinople for political reasons and his country's good.

Not long since the proprietor of this fine old house was "sold out." He wasn't exactly a "poor miserable," but the establishment he was keeping up was not in keeping with the lining of his purse. He was not as his forefathers, who, if they toiled not nor yet did spin, had the good luck to gather riches by some means or other while they lived. Whilst he, on a scant patrimony to which nothing was being added, was going the pace a little too fast.

His creditors called in the bailiff, and the bailiff called in the auctioneer, and the "*bel immeuble*," a "*vaste bâtiment 30 mètres carrés, avec cour, fontaine et plusieures pièces au rez-de-chaussée, et balcon*," was put up at auction.

There were no takers, it appeared,—at the price. The "knock-down" was thirty thousand francs, and it was worth it, the finest house in the Oriental quarter of Tunis, high and dry and built of marble and tile, and safe-guarded by the *pigeons de bonheur*, which lodged on the great central dome of the mosque which overhung the roof-top terrace.

French and Italians, and strangers of all nationalities (including some affected Mussulmans as well), were piling themselves story upon story in great apartment houses in the flat, monotonous new town below, laid out on what a quarter of a century ago was a reedy marsh.

Not one of them would consider for a moment the

question of taking on this fine establishment for a dwelling all his own. They all had their summer-houses out at Carthage, where they were spoiling the landscape, as well as that magnificent historic site, by erecting villas of questionable taste. For their town dwellings these ambitious folk were one and all bent on living in a flat.

It was in this manner that this fine example of Oriental domicile fell to our friend, the attaché of the Embassy. He, at least, knew a good thing when he saw it, and, though he was a bachelor (and never for a moment thought of setting up a harem in the vast *zenana* at the rear), he relished with good will the delights of dwelling in marble halls of his own,—particularly such splendid ones.

It was a problem as to what our friend should do, on account of the great size of the many apartments of this Moorish-Arab house; but like the Japanese and the Moors themselves, he did not make the mistake of filling them with trumpery bric-à-brac and saddle-bag furniture.

It was more or less a great undertaking for a young man to whom housekeeping had hitherto been an unknown accomplishment,—this taking of a great house to live in all alone. For days and weeks, as occasion offered, he stalked its marble halls and pictured the "Arabian Nights" over again, and hazarded many soft and sentimental imaginings as to the personalities of the veiled beauties who once made it their home.

Our friend's first possession was a servant, of the indefinable species called simply a "man servant;" he at any rate could keep the marbles white and the tiles burnished, and the dust from out the crevices of the carved stone vaultings, if there was nothing else to do.

The serving man was readily enough found. He bore the name of Habib, the Algerian, at least that was the translation that he gave in French of its queer Arab characters, though his explanation as to how he came to

descend from parents who were born in Kairouan, the Holy City of Tunisia, and still have the suffix of "*the Algerian*" tacked on at the end, was not very lucid.

Habib was gentle and faithful, but vain and superstitious. To begin with, he was perfectly willing to become a part and parcel of the *ménage*; but he must take rank as a body-servant (whatever his duties might be), and would not be a mere caretaker or a concierge. For that M'sieu René must have a Moroccan, the *chiens fidèles* of North African concierges, or he must go without. Sleep in the house Habib would not; the spirits of past dwellers—some of them perhaps wraiths of folk who had been murdered—would rise up in the dark hours and prevent that; of that he was sure. Stranger infidels might not believe in spooks and spirits, but it was a part of Habib's faith that he should not put himself in a position where they might destroy his rest. Nothing of the kind had ever happened to him up to now, but the fear was always present, and he was minded to take all possible precautions.

Habib ultimately capitulated, and came to "sleeping in." He made his plans stealthily for taking up his residence under the shadow of the mosque. Though Habib's belongings were few, his preparations for moving in were elaborate and lengthy.

Habib had not much more than the clothes on his back, —and a silver-headed cane, without which he never walked the streets of the European quarter, day or night. "In the Arab town you were safe," he said, "but '*là-bas*,' with all the civilized and cosmopolitan riffraff of a great Mediterranean seaport, one's life was not worth a piastre without a weapon of defence."

You must have a license to carry a revolver in Tunis, a permission which the authorities do not readily grant to an Arab; and anyway Habib was afraid of firearms (he was afraid of most everything, as it appeared later, even work),

so he resorted to a cane.

With Habib's clothes on his back, and his cane, arrived a little plush pillow about the size of a pincushion. This was to be his protection against the real, or fancied, evil spirits which he still believed were lurking away between the walls, as indeed they probably had been for centuries. This little plush cushion had been deftly fashioned for him, doubtless, by some veiled Fatmah or Zorah. It may have honestly been thought by its maker, and of course by Habib, to be an effective antidote for the wiles of roving spirits, but certainly no one would ever attribute to it the least virtues as a pillow. The Japanese wooden head-rest were preferable to Habib's spirit-charmer for wooing Morpheus.

Habib at last had taken the fatal step, he had become a part and parcel of the establishment. To be sure he had not much to do; the new patron, being alone, had furnished only a part of the chambers, apartments, and salons in semi-European fashion, and Habib's chief duties consisted only in "turning them out" in succession, on consecutive days, and putting them in order again. There is not a great quantity of grime and dirt that ever penetrates beyond the courtyard of an Arab house, and the actual labour of keeping it clean would please the indolent mind of the laziest "maid of all work" that ever lived.

Habib handled the situation as well as might be expected —for a time. Afterwards he fell off a bit. He was faithful, obliging, smiling and sentimental, but he still slept bad o' nights, or said he did. The powers of his pincushion pillow were evidently negative or neutral so far as the particular spirits which lodged here were concerned.

With his new station in life Habib came to an increased importance, and from a loose white cotton robe or burnous, he came to be the proud possessor of a flowing creation in crimson silk which was the envy of all his acquaintances. Beneath it he wore a yellow embroidered vest, red silk

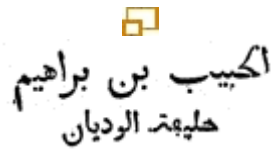
stockings, and yellow boots of Morocco leather, not really boots, nor yet shoes, but a sort of a cross between a shoe and a moccasin, which cost him the extravagant sum of twenty francs, half a month's pay.

On his head was perched the conventional red Tunisian fez, with an inordinately long tassel dangling down behind, as effective a *chasse-mouches* as one would want. This was not all. A dollar watch, with a silver-gilt chain and fob of quaint Kabyle workmanship,—worth probably twenty times the value of the watch,—completed his personal adornment.

As an accessory, Habib became the proud possessor of a visiting-card, which, more than all else, was successful in impressing his confrères and the neighbouring shopkeepers with his importance.

They imagined him, doubtless, a sort of seneschal or majordomo of some kingdom in little.

Habib bore his honours lightly and gaily. There was not much fault to be found with him, simply from the fact that he had so little to do that he would be a numskull indeed if he could not, or would not, perform it well. He did perform his duties well, ordinarily, but the first time a good round day's work fell to his share, such as cleaning down the walls and mopping up the whole area of marbled floor, he rendered an account for the services of "*quatre juifs, quarante sous*." Forty cents for the services of four house-cleaners for a day is not dear, and Habib was not even of the same faith as his workmen, so the *châtelain* paid it gracefully in the next week's account which Habib rendered.



Habib's Visiting Card

Habib's bookkeeping was as original as himself. His accounts for the house-cleaning week read as follows:

Quatre juifs	2 fcs.	
Lait en boite (pour le matou)	1	
Gâteau de miel (pour la gazelle)		60 centimes
Divers (tortue, etc.)	1	20
Totaux à payer de suite	4 fcs.	80 centimes

How he made both ends meet with the sum total of his modest budget was ever a problem with our friend.

The city-bred Arab has the reputation of being unreliable in money matters, but certainly the hidden graft lying dormant in four francs eighty centimes can not be very great after paying two francs for four Jews, a franc for condensed milk for the cat, sixty centimes for honey-cakes for the gazelle, and a franc twenty centimes for sundry and diverse odds and ends like soap, metal-polish, barley for the turtle, etc. Habib was certainly a good thing!

Habib's chief pride in the house and its belongings was for the cat, the gazelle, and the turtle, each of them gifts from the same amiable youth. Perhaps he had no place to keep them himself, and in this he saw an opportunity of getting them housed and fed free. Habib may have been wiser than he looked, but at any rate here the menagerie came to be installed as proper and picturesque occupants of this marble palace of other days.

The cat is a useful and even necessary animal in any

home, and its virtues have often been praised. A gazelle is purely decorative, but as agreeable and affectionate a little beast as ever lived. The turtle catches flies and lives in a pool of the fountain, and is also useful in keeping down microbes which might otherwise be disseminated. This array of live stock ought to be an adjunct of every house with a fountain courtyard, and if it can be had on the terms as supplied by the faithful Habib, not forgetting the small cost of the animals' keep, why so much the better.

The particular quarter where our friend's house was situated was indeed the most quaintly variegated one in all Tunis. At Bab-Souika one turned sharply and entered a veritable labyrinth of narrow, twisting streets, never arriving at the great gate of the house by the same itinerary. Sometimes you arrived directly, and sometimes you circled and tacked like a ship at sea.

From the Place Bab-Souika itself, whence radiated a burning fever of the Arab life of all the ten tribes, it was but the proverbial stone's throw, by a bird's-eye view from the roof-top terrace, though by the twisting lanes and alleys it was perhaps a kilometre. There was an occultism and Orientalism here that was to be seen nowhere else in North Africa, and for "mystery" it beat that of the desert, over which poets and novelists rave, all to pieces. No one but an Arab and a Mussulman could ever be a part of that wonderful kaleidoscopic chapter of life. We poor dogs of infidels can only stand by and wonder.

All night long the Place Bab-Souika was as animated as in the day. It was fringed with many Moorish cafés, interspersed with the *échoppes* of the Tunisian Jews, who push in everywhere, and make a living off of pickings that others think too trivial for their talents. A few boulevard-like trees flank a group of transformed and remodelled Arab houses and give a suspicion of modernity, but the general aspect throughout is Oriental and mediæval. A regular ant-hill of hiving humanity: Moors, Arabs, Turks,

Jews, Soudanese, and Touaregs, all with costumes as varied as their origins. Here a creamy-white burnous jostles with a baggy blue *pantalon*, and the cowled nodding head of a Bedouin rests on the shoulder of an equally somnolent red-fezzed soldier of the Bey. The more wide-awake members of the hangers-on of the cafés enliven the scene with singing and even dancing, perhaps with some Tunisian dancing-girl as a partner. All is gay and scintillating as if it were the most gorgeous café of the Boulevard des Italiens. One and all of the merrymakers are richly costumed, with broidered vests and flowing robes of silk, and clattering silver ornaments and bouquets of flowers,—or a single flower stuck behind the ear, like the Spaniard's cigarette. All blends into a wonderful fanfare of colour, and it was through this stage-setting our friend had to pass every night as he made his way from the European town below to his Arab house on the height.

The Oriental, when he is making merry at a café, is wholly indifferent to the affairs of the workaday world, if he ever did occupy himself therewith. His point of view is peculiarly his own; we outsiders will never appreciate it, study the question as we may.

Besides the Moorish cafés, the fruit and sweetmeat sellers seem also to do as large a midnight traffic as that of the day. The after-theatre supper of the Arab, if he were given to that sort of thing, would not be difficult of consummation here.

The Arab old-clo' dealer is another habitué of the neighbourhood. "*T'meniach! ra sourdis! T'meniach 'ra T'meniach!*" This is the Arab's old clothes cry. And for a hundred sous, paid over on the Place Bab-Souika, you can be transformed into a Bedouin from head to heel,—with a ragged burnous full of holes and a pair of very-much-down-at-the-heel *babouches* which have already trod off untold kilometres on the Tunisian highway and are good for many more.

There is another class of ambulant merchant who is a frequenter of this most animated of Tunis' native quarter. He deals in a better line of goods, in that his wares are new and not second-hand, though tawdry enough, many of them. If you wish you may buy—after appropriate and not to be avoided bargaining, at which you will probably come off second best—a collaret of false sequins, an Arab blanket, or a Turkish ink-pot, which may not be old in spite of its looks. All these things are made to order to-day, after the ancient models and styles, like the cotton goods of India with palm-leaf designs, which are mostly made in Manchester.

"*Veux-tu un foulard, Sidi, un beau foulard de Tounis? Vois achète-moi ce poignard Kabyle! Tiens, veux-tu ce bracelet pour madame?*" You want none of these things, but you make out as if you did and accordingly you buy "something" before you are through, guiltily thinking you have taken advantage of the poor fellow in that you beat him down from fifteen francs to five for a foulard which cost him, probably, not more than thirty sous of some Israelite "*fournisseur*" in the *souks*.

One day Habib the Algerian would work no more. He had succumbed to a bad case of the wandering foot, though what brought it about, save the ennui of his position,—not enough work to do—our friend René never knew. It was doubtful if Habib knew himself. It was as if the termination of Habib's name had set him to thinking. Habib the Algerian! Why should he not travel a bit, as did these dogs of Christians who were overrunning his beloved land, to Algeria even, he who bore the name of the Algerian, though he had lived since his infancy beneath the shadow of Tunis' mosques.

"*Où vas-tu?*" asked his employer, as Habib's bag and baggage were on the door-sill, a parcel of worldly goods now grown to some proportions, including a nickel alarm-clock, a phonograph, and an oil-stove. American products

all of them.

"*Moi? En Algérie!*" answered Habib in jerky, limpid French.

"*Et pourquoi?*"

"*Pourquoi? Pour rien. Pour aller. Chimin-di-fi andar plus vite que chevil. Hou! Hou! Hou!*" he continued, attempting to imitate the wheezy locomotives of the Bône-Guelma line, which link Tunisia with Algeria, his eyes meanwhile expressing the joy of an infant.

The travel fever was on with Habib; it had struck in, even as it had before now with some of the rest of us.

That was the last that was seen or heard of Habib the Algerian, except that we caught a glimpse of him at the railway station as he was pushing insistently into a third-class carriage already full to overflowing with other wandering, huddling Arabs, who, too, thought with Habib that the "*chimin-di-fi andar plus vite que li chivil. Hou! Hou! Hou!*"

This was probably but the beginning of another chapter of Habib's history; but now that he was gone he had passed from mind. But he had left the gazelle, the cat, the goldfish and the turtle behind. It was as if a part of the old house itself had been wrenched away. Habib had become a part and parcel of the whole machine, and in spite of his shortcomings he fitted in with things in a marvellously competent manner. No other soft-footed Arab could quite take his place, and many were tried. The cat ate the goldfish, the turtle mysteriously disappeared up or down a spout, and the gazelle died of a broken heart, or because of the irregularity of the supply of honey-cakes.

With such sad memories our friend René had to desert his "*maison arabe*," where he had lived so comfortably, and go and live in a flat in the new town below, where the view from the windows was comprised principally of a *kiosque* of the Paris boulevard variety, a row of taximètre

cabs, and the seven-story façade of another apartment house on the other side of the street.

There is a fine old Arab house at Tunis, midway between the "Residency" and the Kasba, still for rent, if any there be who think they would care to undertake the struggle of keeping it running in proper order. It has many things in its favour, and some which are manifestly against it, the chief of these last being the difficulty of solving the servant question. It is the same question which ruffles householders the world over, in Tunis as in Toledo, in Kairouan as in Kalamazoo.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE GLORY THAT ONCE WAS CARTHAGE

CARTHAGE, redolent of the memories of Dido, of Æneas, of Hannibal, of Cato, of Scipio, and a thousand other classic souvenirs of history, is the chief sight for tourists in the neighbourhood of Tunis. All we have learned to expect is there, deformed ruins and relics of a grandeur long since past. The aqueduct which plays so grand a rôle in the opera of "Salambo" is there, but it is manifestly Roman and not Punic. Thus did Flaubert nod, as indeed did Homer before him.

Carthage, as Carthage is to-day, is not much. It is but a vast, conglomerate mass of fragmentary ruins, a circus whose outlines can scarcely be traced, a very much ruined amphitheatre, various ground-plans of great villas of other days, the cisterns of the Romans, some Punic tombs, and the two ports of Carthage around which history, romance and legend have woven many tales. The rest is modern, the great basilica of St. Louis, the palaces of the Bey, and the princes of his family, the villas of the foreign consuls, the seminary of the White Fathers and a hotel or two. That is

Carthage to-day.

Thus the history and romance of a past day must supply the motive for the visitors' emotions, for there is little else save the magnificent site and the knowledge that one is treading historic ground. The tract might well have been made a sort of national park, and kept inviolate; but it has been given over to the land exploiter like Tottenham Park and South New York, and the overflow from Tunis is already preëmpting choice plots.

Through the gates of the Venice of Antiquity, all the wealth of the East was brought to be stored in the warehouses of the ports of Carthage, but to-day all this is only an historic memory. The palaces and warehouses have disappeared, and the two mud-puddle "ports" have silted up into circular pools which glisten in the African sunlight like mirrors of antiquity,—which is exactly what they are.

Carthage, or what is left of it, is a dozen or fifteen kilometres from Tunis, by a puffing little steam-tram (to be supplanted some day by an electric railway, which will be even less in keeping).





The Ports of Carthage

One gets off at La Malga, and, in a round of half a dozen kilometres "does" Carthage, Sidi-bou-Saïd, and La Marsa in the conventional manner in half a day. If he, or she, is an artist or an archæologist, he, or she, spends a day, a week, or a month, and then will have cause to return if opportunity offers.

According to tradition the Tyrians founded Carthage in 813 B.C., being conducted thither by Elissa, a progressive young woman, the sister of Pygmalion. *Cart-hadchat* was its original name, which the Romans evolved into *Carthago*, signifying "the new city," that is to say, probably, the "*New Tyre*." Owing to its proximity to Sicily, to all the vast wealth of Africa, and the undeveloped and unexplored shores of the Western Mediterranean, Carthage was bound to prosper. As Tyre fell into decadence, and the Greeks menaced the Phœnicians in the East, Carthage

came to its own very rapidly, not by a mushroom growth, as with new-made cities of to-day, but still rapidly for its epoch.

The riches of the people of Carthage became immense, every one prospered, and its merchants trafficked with the Soudan and sailed the seas to Britain, while Hanno, the Carthaginian admiral, first discovered and explored the full extent of the West African Atlantic coast.

In the first Punic war Carthage disputed the ownership of Sicily with Rome, but without success; though indeed she was able to hold the gateway of the Western Mediterranean, and thus remain mistress of the trade with the outside world.

With the second Punic war Carthage lost further prestige, and her military and maritime strength was reduced to such an extent that her hitherto vast African Empire was restricted to the city itself and a closely bounding suburban area.

Even then Carthage ranked as the richest city in the world, with a population of 700,000 souls. In the year 146 B.C. the Romans rose again and gave Carthage a sweeping knock-out blow so far as its independence went.

Cæsar and Augustus came, and the city, peopled anew, was restored to something resembling its former magnificent lines and made the capital of the Roman African Province. A commercial city, wealthy, luxurious, gay, and cultivated, it became, next to Rome, the first Latin city of the Occident.

Christianity was introduced in the early centuries, and through the gateway of Carthage was spread over all North Africa. Religious partisanship was as rife and violent here as elsewhere, and Tertullian tells how, in the great circus amphitheatre, whose scantly outlined ruins are still to be seen as one leaves the railway at La Malga, Saint Perpétua and her companions were put to death by ferocious beasts,

and how, in 258 A.D., Saint Cyprien, who was bishop at the time, was martyred.

The Vandals captured the city in 439 A.D., and the Byzantine powers under Justinian's general, Belisarius, got it all back again in 533 A.D., though they held it but a hundred and sixty years. The city finally succumbed, in the seventh century, to Hassan-ben-Nomane, who destroyed it completely. How completely this destruction was one may judge by a contemplation of the ruins to-day. The Tunisians and the Italians have used the site as a quarry for centuries, and Pisa's cathedral was constructed in no small part from marbles and stone from glorious Carthage.

Dido, Hannibal, and Salambo have passed away, and with them the glory of Carthage. To-day tourists come and go, the "White Fathers" exploit their vineyards, and the promoters sell land in this new subdivision to the profit, the great profit—of some one.

The Punic remains at Carthage, the tombs and other minor constructions, are of course few (the Musée Lavigerie on the height now guarding all the discoveries of value). But the fragments of the great civic buildings of the Romans are everywhere scattered about.

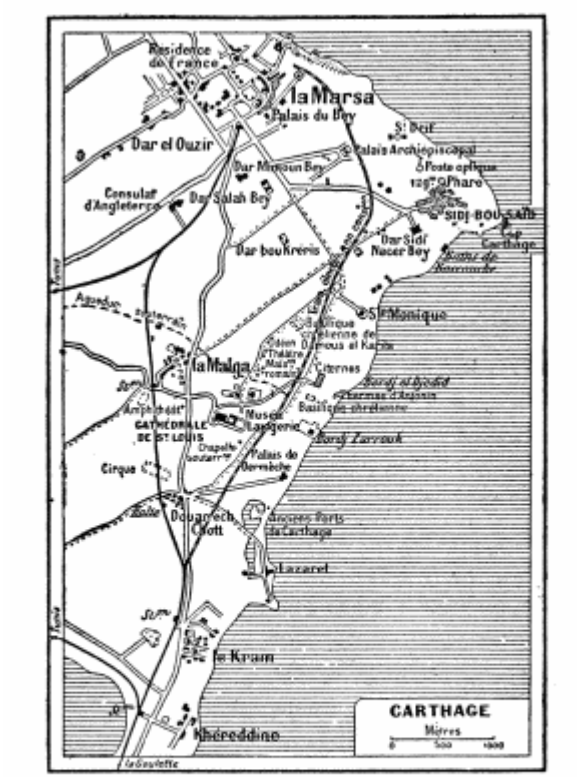
These ruins cannot even be detailed here, and the plan herewith will serve as a much better guide than a mere perfunctory catalogue.

Various erudite historical accounts and guide-books have been written concerning this historic ground; shorter works, of more interest to the tourist, can be had in the Tunis book-shops.

The discoveries of the last ten years on the site of the ancient Carthage have been many and momentous. They are of intense interest, revealing a people who possessed a far higher development than had been supposed, and who were, contrary to the general belief in modern times, something more than mere traffickers and merchants, and

who evolved an art of their own, a unique and fascinating blend of the ideals of the Semitic and the Greek.

Our knowledge of the Phœnicians is still



shadowy and fragmentary; but the work conducted by the "White Fathers" of Carthage, under the direction of Père Delattre, has provided at least a foundation for further

researches and comparisons, which no doubt will soon be undertaken.

The recent discoveries of Carthage may well be described as fascinating. Take for example the sarcophagus of a Phœnician priestess unearthed in 1902. It is believed that she lived in the third century B.C. The coloured marble sarcophagus is of the best period of Greek workmanship. A Greek carved this tomb, no doubt, but in the representation of the priestess we have a figure of a type unlike any Greek art known,—a type of beauty delightfully strange, a countenance of a noble loveliness and charm.

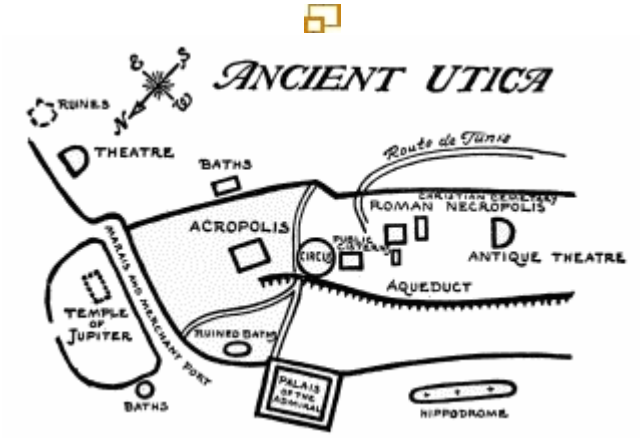
A sympathetic French *archéologue* puts it in the following words:

"The brilliancy of colour and strangeness of attire, far from detracting from the dignity of her presence, seem to enhance the noble simplicity and reserve suggested by the figure. A rare and lovely personality seems to have been the inspiration of the sculptor. She was not a Greek, nor an Egyptian, and the Semitic features are hardly recognizable. The dove in the figure's right hand may well be taken as a symbol of her own gentle beauty and sweetness. Surely this is a pure type of Phœnician womanhood. That majestic calm which is the outward and visible sign of the highest courage within comports well with the reputation of the women of Carthage, and their bearing in that terrible siege which tried them unto death."

This is the sort of sentiment which still hovers over Carthage; but to sense it to the full, one must know the city's history in detail, and not merely by a hurried half a day round, out from Tunis and back between breakfast and dinner. Another recent find is the unearthed Roman palace built up over an old Punic burial-place. Luxurious, though of diminutive proportions, this palace, or villa, possesses a pavement in mosaic worthy to rank with that classic example of the Villa Hadrian at Tivoli. It may be seen to-day at the Musée, and is one of the things to be noted down

by even the hurried traveller.

En route from Tunis to Bizerta, thirty-five kilometres from the former city and about the same from Carthage, is the ancient Utica, founded by the Phœnicians centuries before the beginning of the Christian era, and which, after the destruction of Carthage, became the first city of Africa.



To-day the domain of Bou-Chateur, belonging to a M. Chabannes, contains all that remains above ground of this vassal city of Carthage. Once a seaport of importance, like Carthage, it gradually succumbed to a sort of dry rot and is no more.

The remains existing to-day are extensive, but very fragmentary. Only bare outlines are here and there visible; but from them some one has been able to construct a plan of the city on something approaching its former lines.

Immediately neighbouring upon Carthage is Sidi-bou-Saïd, easily the most picturesque village around Tunis, if one excepts the low-lying fishing village of La Goulette, better known by its Italian name of La Goletta. La Goulette itself played an important rôle in the sixteenth century. Charles V occupied it in 1535, and it became a fortified

stronghold of the Spanish; but in spite of the fact that it was further fortified by Don Juan of Austria, after the battle of Lepanto, it was captured by the Turks under Sinan-Pacha the following year after a memorable siege. For the devout, La Goulette is of great interest from the fact that Saint Vincent de Paul was a captive here in the seventeenth century.

The little *indigène* village of Sidi-bou-Saïd sits on the promontory called Cap Carthage and has a local colour all its own. It is purely "native," the land agent not yet having marked it for his own. The panorama of the snow-white walls and domes and turrets of the little town, the red-rock base on which it sits, the blue sea offshore, and the blue sky overhead, is a wonderful sight to the person of artistic tastes. Certainly its like is not in Africa, if elsewhere along the shores of the Mediterranean.

Beyond Sidi-bou-Saïd is La Marsa, without character or history, save that the Bey's summer palace and the country residences of the foreign consuls are here. The site is delightful and looks seaward in most winning fashion. On the hillsides round about is grown the grape from which is made the celebrated "*vin blanc de Carthage*," as much an accompaniment of the shrimps of the Lac de Tunis as is the "vin de Cassis" of *bouillabaisse*, or Chablis of oysters. In the neighbourhood are numerous caves, forming the ancient Jewish necropolis of Carthage under Roman domination.

Due north from Tunis a matter of nearly a hundred kilometres is Bizerta, now a French Mediterranean naval base as formidable, or at any rate as useful, as Gibraltar. It was the Hippo-Diarrhytus of the ancients, whose inhabitants were at continual warfare with those of Carthage. Under the Empire it was a Roman colony, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries became one of the refuges of the Moors expelled from Spain.

The French occupation has made of Bizerta and its lake

a highly active and prosperous neighbourhood, where formerly a scant population of the mixed Mediterranean races gave it only the dignity of a fishing village. It is very picturesque, its waterside, its canals, and its *quais*, but the primitiveness of other days is giving way before the moves in the game of peace and war, until everywhere one hears the bustle and groan of ships and shipping, and sees clouds of smoke piling up into the cloudless sky from the gaping chimneys of machine-shops on shore and torpedo boats and battle-ships on the water. It is old Bizerta rubbing shoulders with new Bizerta at every step.

Bizerta is now the most important strategic point in the Mediterranean. Gibraltar is covered by the Spanish fortifications at Algeçiras and Ceuta, and Malta is merely a rock-bound fortress that could be starved out in a month. The Mediterranean is French,—a French lake if you will,—as it always has been, and as it always will be. Tripoli in Barbary and Morocco, when they come under the French flag, as they are bound to do, will only accentuate the fact.

CHAPTER XXV

THE BARBARY COAST

THE real Barbary coast of the romantic days of the corsairs was the whole North African littoral. Here the pirates and corsairs had their lairs, their inlet harbours known only to themselves and their *confrères*, who as often pillaged and murdered among themselves as they did among strangers.

To-day all this is changed. It was the government of the United States and Decatur, as much as any other outside power, who drove the Barbary pirates from the seas.

Under the reign of Louis XIV Duquesne was charged to suppress the piracies of the Tripolitan coasts. The

celebrated admiral—it was he who also gave the original name to the site of the present city of Pittsburgh on the Monongahela—got down to business once the orders were given, sighted eight of the Barbary feluccas and gave them chase. They took refuge in the Sultan's own port of Chio, but, with the French close on their heels, they were captured forthwith, and the Pacha of Tripoli was forced without more ado to make a treaty containing many onerous conditions. The corsairs gave back a ship which they had taken, and all the French who had fallen prisoners in their hands and who were virtually held in slavery. The admirals of those days had a way of doing things.

After the French came the English. Blake, the British admiral, who never trod the deck of a vessel until he was fifty, did his part to sweep these fierce Mediterranean pirates of Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli from the seas. The United States Navy did the rest. This is history; let those who are further interested look it up.

The North African coast-line from Tunis to Tangier has the aspect of much of the rest of the Mediterranean littoral, but that strip sweeping around from Cap Carthage to Tripoli in Barbary, the shores of the great Tripolitan gulf, may still furnish the setting for as fierce a piratical tale as can be conceived,—only the pirates are wanting.

This low-lying ground south of Tunis is not a tourist-beaten ground; it is almost unknown and unexplored to the majority of winter travellers, who include only Algiers, Biskra, and Tunis in their African itinerary.

South from Tunis, the first place of importance is Hammamet, an embryotic watering-place for the Tunisians, called by the natives "the city of pigeons."





This up-and-coming station on the route which binds "Numidia" with "Africa" is possessed of a remarkable source of fresh-water supply. The Romans in ancient times exploited this same source, and built a monumental arcade on the site. All vestiges of this architectural work have however disappeared.

At Nabeul, a few kilometres away, one gets a curious glimpse of native life interspersed with that of the Jews. Mosques, *souks*, and synagogues give an Oriental blend as lively in colouring and variety as will satisfy the most insistent. Nabeul's industry consists chiefly in the fabrication of pottery,—a fragile, crude, but lovely pottery, which travellers carry afar, and which is the marvel of all who contemplate it. The enterprise is of French origin, but the labour which produces these quaint jugs, vases, and platters (which are not dear in price) is purely native. The potter's thumb marks are over all. The pieces have not been rubbed and burnished down, and accordingly the

collector knows he has got the real thing, and not a German or Belgian clay-thrower's imitation.

Nabeul was the ancient Neapolis, which was destroyed by the Romans at the same time that Carthage came under the domination of Augustus.

South again from Nabeul, by road or rail, for the railroad still continues another hundred kilometres, and one is at Sousse. Change cars for Kairouan, the Holy City of Tunisia!

Sousse is an important and still growing port with as mixed a population as one will see in any Mediterranean town of twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The French number perhaps twelve hundred, the Italians three or four thousand, and the Maltese as many as the French. The rest are Arabs; you might call them seafaring Arabs rather than desert Arabs, for they are as often on the sea as off it.

The *souks* of Sousse are famous. There is no longer a great Berber or Byzantine city closed in with walls with a gate on each cardinal face; all this has disappeared in the march of progress; but the Arab town, everywhere in Algeria and Tunisia, is a feature of the life of the times, even though it has been encroached upon by European civilization. The *souks*, or markets, are here more bizarre and further removed from our twentieth-century ideas of how business is, and should be, done than in any other mixed European-Mussulman centre of population.

In the Souk des Herbages are sold roots and herbs of all sorts, pimento peppers, henna, garance, dried peas, and other vegetables. The Souk des Arabes holds the rug and carpet sellers, the armourers, the weavers of the cloth of the burnous, tailors, etc. In the Souk des Juifs, a dark, ill-smelling, tiny nest of narrow corridors, are found the jewelry makers and the broiderers.

This and more of the same kind is Sousse. In addition there are the brilliant variegated sails of the Italian and

Maltese fishing-boats, the *dhows* of the Arabs, and all the miscellaneous riffraff which associates itself mysteriously with a great seaport. Sousse is an artist's paradise, and its hotels are excellent,—if one cares for sea food and eternal mutton and lamb.

The Kasba of Sousse sits high on the hillside overlooking the Arab town and the *souks*. A long swing around the boulevards brings one to the same culminating point.

A Phœnician acropolis stood here before the eleventh century, and the remains of a pagan temple to-day bear witness to the strong contrast of the manners of yesterday and to-day. The great signal-tower of the citadel is a reconstruction of a pharo called Khalef-el-Feta, which stood here in 1068. Whatever may have been the value of this fortification in days gone by, it looks defective enough to-day with its hybrid mass of nondescript structures. At all times, and from all points of view, it is imposing and spectacular, and is the dominant note of every landscape round about. Its angularities are not beautiful, nor even solid-looking, and the whole thing is stagy; but for all that it is imposing and above all grim and suggestive of unspeakable Turkish atrocities that may have been carried on in its immediate neighbourhood.

Monastir is a near neighbour of Sousse, twenty odd kilometres away, over as fine a roadway as one may see anywhere. Automobilists take notice! The Hôtel de Paris at Monastir has a "sight" in its dining-hall, which alone is worth coming to see, aside from the excellent breakfast which you get for fifty sous. This apartment was formerly the great reception-hall of the Arab governors of the province, and as such becomes at once an historic shrine and a novelty.

Not a town in Algeria or Tunisia has so quaint a vista as that looking down Monastir's "Grande Rue." It's not very ancient, nor squalidly picturesque, but somehow it is

characteristically quaint. And it "composes" wonderfully well, for either the artist's canvas or the kodaker's film. Sousse and Monastir should be omitted from no artist's itinerary which is supposed to include unspoiled sketching grounds.

Kairouan, the Mohammedan Holy City of Tunisia, lies sixty kilometres southwest from Sousse.

Kairouan dates only from the Mussulman conquest, having been founded by the propagator of Islam in Africa, Okba-ben-Nafi (50 Heg. 671 A.D.). Kairouan became the capital of what is now Tunisia in the ninth century, and Tunis itself was its servitor. Up to this day Kairouan has guarded its religious supremacy as the Holy City of the Eastern Moghreb, and accordingly is a place of pilgrimage for the faithful of all North Africa.

The French occupied the city in 1881 without resistance on the part of the inhabitants. And to-day it is a live, wide-awake important centre of affairs, besides being a Mohammedan shrine of the very first rank.

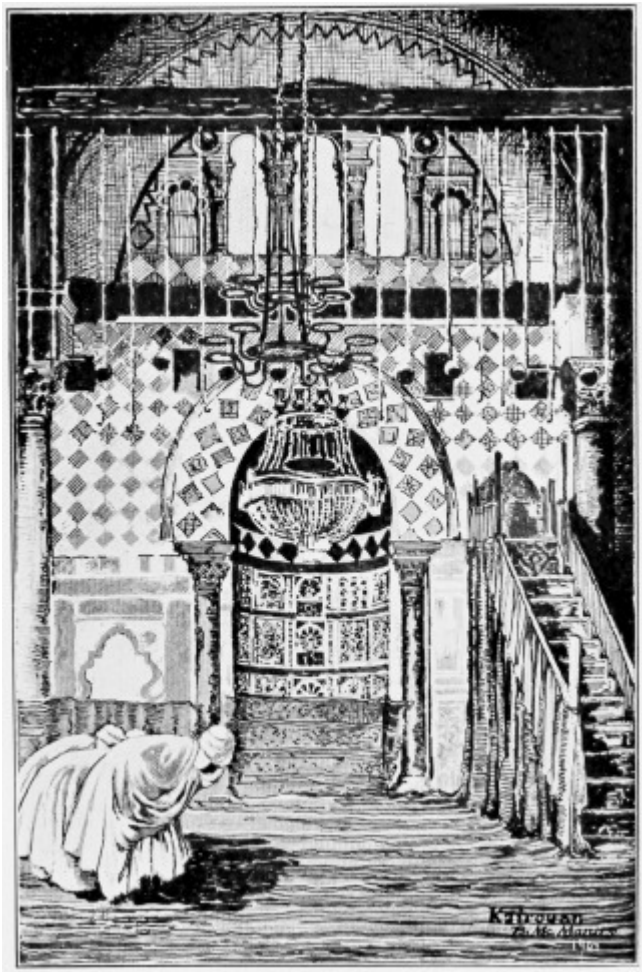
The native city is entirely free from French innovations and remains almost as it was centuries ago. The mosques and the native city are all-in-all for the stranger within the gates, particularly the mosques, for here, of all places in Tunisia, their doors are opened to the "dogs of infidels" of overseas. But you must remove your shoes as you enter, or put on *babouches* over your "demi-Americain" boots, which you bought in Marseilles before leaving France (poor things, by the way; one suspects they were made in England, not in America at all).

Of first importance are the mosques of Sidi-Okba, the "Grande Mosquée;" and of Sidi-Sahab, the "Mosquée du Barbier." The Djama Sidi-Okba, or "Grande Mosquée," is a grandly imposing structure with a massive square minaret of the regulation Tunisian variety. Within it is of the classic type, with seventeen aisles and eight great

thoroughfares crossing at right angles. It is a cosmopolitan edifice in all its parts, having been variously rebuilt and added to with the march of time, the earliest constructive details being of the third century of the Hegira, the ninth of our era.

The *minbar*, or pulpit, the *faïences*, the ceilings and the best of Hispano-Arabic details are here all of a superlative luxuriance and mystery. The "Mosquée du Barbier" ("Sidi-Sahab") is built over the sepulchre of one of the companions of the Prophet himself. Legend says that he always carried with him three hairs of the beard of the Prophet. These were buried with him, of course, but whether that was his sole recommendation for immortality the writer does not know. Less imposing than





In a Kairouan Mosque

the "Grande Mosquée," this latter is quite as elaborately beautiful in all its parts. The carved wooden ceiling, the rugs and carpets of rare weaves, the stuccos and the *faïences*, are all very effective and seemingly genuine, though here and there (as in the tomb of Sidi-Sahab) one sees the hand of the Renaissance Italian workman instead of that of the Moor.

Kairouan has a special variety of *cafés chantants* and *cafés dansants*, which is much more the genuine thing than those at Biskra or Tunis.

Still south from Tunis, further south even than Sousse, Kairouan, and Sfax, lies a wonderful, undeveloped and little known country of oases and *chotts*, the latter being great expanses of marshy land sometime doubtless arms of the sea itself. The oases of Gabès and Tozeur are called the *pays des dattes*, for here flourish the finest date-palms known to the botanical world; while the oases themselves take rank as the most populous and beautiful of all those of the great African desert.

The *chotts* are great depressions in the soil and abound in the region lying between Touggourt and Biskra in Algeria, and Gabès in Tunisia. The *chotts* are undoubtedly dried-out beds of some long disappeared river, lake or bay, and their crystallized surfaces are to-day veritable death-traps to the stranger who wanders away from the beaten caravan tracks which cross them.

The *chotts* are very ancient, and an account of a caravan which was lost in one of them was published by a Spanish historian of the ninth century. Herodotus, too, makes mention of a Lake Triton, probably the Chott-Nefzaoua of to-day, which communicated with the Syrte, now the Gulf of Gabès.

The "Sud-Tunisien," as all this vast region is known, is all but an unknown land to the tourist. Sousse and Sfax are populous, busy maritime cities, largely Europeanized, but still retaining an imprint quite their own. Kairouan, just westward from Sousse, where the railway ends, is the chief tourist shrine of Tunis outside Tunis itself and Carthage. But beyond, except for an occasional stranger who would hunt the gazelle, the moufflon, or the wild boar, none ever penetrate, save those who are engaged in the development of the country, and the military, who are everywhere.

Between Sousse and Sfax is El Djem, the Thysdrus of the time of Cæsar, and afterwards one of the richest cities of North Africa. Gordian, the proconsul, was proclaimed emperor of the colony in 238 A.D., and the present grand old ruin of an amphitheatre, a great oval like the Colosseum at Rome, served many times as a fortification against Berber and Vandal hordes, besides performing its conventional functions. El Djem and its marvellous arena, nearly five hundred feet in length and four hundred in width, is one of the surprises of the Tunisian itinerary.



Amphetheatre EL-DJEM

From Sfax, which is linked with Sousse by a service of public automobiles, another apologetic loose end of railway takes birth and runs west to Gafsa, a military post of importance and not much else; a favourite spot for the French army board to exile refractory soldiers. They leave them here to broil under a summer sun and work at road-making in the heat of the day. After that they are less refractory, if indeed they are not dead of the fever.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE OASIS OF TOZEUR

ONE arrives at Tozeur via Sfax and Gafsa and the light narrow-gauge railway belonging to the company exploiting the phosphate mines. Beyond Gafsa the line runs to Metlaoui, peopled only by six hundred phosphate workers of the mines, a mixed crew of Arabs, Sicilians, and Maltese, speaking a veritable *jargon des ours*, which nobody but themselves can understand. It is strange, this little industrial city of the desert, but it is unlovely, consisting only of little whitewashed cubes of houses, a school-house, a miniature church and mosque, and a few miserable little shops.

Gafsa is the chief metropolis of the region of the *chotts*. It is called by the Arabs the pearl of the Djérid, and is a military post, and the *bled*, or market town, for untold thousands of desert nomads. The same word *bled*, when used by the city dweller, means the desert. Such are the inconsistencies of Arab nomenclature. They almost equal our own.

Tozeur is reached from Gafsa by any one of a half dozen means. On foot, on bicycle,—if you will, by automobile,—if you have the courage, by diligence, *calèche*, or on horse, donkey, or camel back. If by either of the latter means, you will of course be accompanied by a grinning blackamoor who will respond to the name of Mohammed, and be thoroughly useless except to prod the animal now and then. You and he will understand each other by sign language, or by what might be called phonetic French, and you will get on very well. Tozeur is eighty odd kilometres from Gafsa over a "*route carrossable*," as the French describe a carriage road,—sandy and rutty in places; but still a road which ranks considerably higher than most of those of Ohio or Indiana. There are no means of obtaining provisions, or even water, *en route*, so the journey must be made either in a day, or arrangements made for camping out overnight. With a good guide the journey might preferably be made at night, for a nocturnal ramble in the

desert is likely to awaken emotions in the sentimentally inclined which will be something unique among their previous experiences.

An Arab horse or mule will think nothing of doing sixty kilometres between sunrise and sunset, but if a *calèche* is to be one's mode of conveyance, thirty-six hours is none too long to allow for the journey from Gafsa to Tozeur.

The high-class Arab professes a contempt for the donkey or the mule, though this indeed is no part of his creed, for we must not ignore that it was a donkey that the Prophet most loved among beasts.

For the masses who have passed the *bourriquet* stage, the mule is the beast of burden par excellence. The Bey of Tunis, when he takes his promenades abroad, has a team of six mules attached to his band-wagon coach, and superb and distinguished-looking beasts they are; but the desert Sheik will have nothing but an Arabian horse, not the "charger shod with fire" of the drawing-room song, but a sound, sturdy, agile beast, a good goer and handsome to look upon.

The *indigène's* mule will amble along over a desert track fourteen or sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, carrying his human burden in the characteristic Arab saddle known as a *borda*, and scarcely seeming to feel the weight.

The Arab is habitually kind to his beast of burden, at least he is no more cruel to him than most lighter coloured humanity, and not nearly as much so as the Sicilian and the Spaniard.





El Oued

The little donkey to which the Prophet showed compassion was doubtless a contrary little beast at times; but, since he is reputed to have been able to go leagues and leagues without either eating or drinking, loaded with burdens at which a full-grown mule and horse had balked, the *bourriquet* of the desert Arab must have had (and has) some undeniable virtues. Not often is his lot an unhappy one, and the strangling curb and bit and the resounding whacks from a spade or shovel, with which the sunny-faced Italian usually regales his four-footed friends, are seldom to be noted in North Africa. The Arab is voluntarily just towards all living things, and if he sometimes forgets himself, and gives his camel or his donkey a vicious prod, he, perhaps, has had provocation, for both are contrary beasts at times.

En route one passes many caravans, fifty or a hundred camels in a bunch, half as many horses and mules, a score of donkeys, and a troop of women, children, and dogs

bringing up the rear. Most of them are making for Kairouan or Gabès, coming from Algeria through the gateways of El Oued and Ourgala. The camels march in Indian file, loaded down with bales and barrels, a hundred, a hundred and fifty and more kilos to each. No other means of transportation is so practicable for the commerce of the desert, nor will be until some one invents a broad-tired automobile that won't sink in the sand. The camel's foot, by the way, doesn't sink in the sand, and that is why he is more of a success in the desert than any other carrier. When the ideal automobile for the desert comes, the ship of the desert will disappear, as the horse is disappearing from the cities and towns of Europe and America.

Intermingled with the caravans are occasional flocks of sheep, black-faced sheep and rams, with two, three, and even four horns apiece, and fat, wobbly tails of extraordinary size, the characteristic, it seems, of the sheep of the Sud-Tunisien. Like the hump and the six stomachs of the camel, this fat caudal appendage of the Tunisian sheep is a sort of reserve supply of energy, and when it is dry picking along the route, they live on their fat. Other animals often starve under like conditions.

Long before Tozeur is reached one wonders if the guide has not lost his bearings. Probably he hasn't, but it is all like the trackless ocean to the man in the saddle, and the mule or donkey or camel doesn't seem to care in the least which way his head is turned so long as he is not made to push forward at full speed.

If one encounters a native, the guide being momentarily hidden behind a sand-dune, most likely a *bonjour* or a *salut* will be forthcoming; but that is all. The native's French vocabulary is often small, and in these parts he is quite as likely to know as much of Italian, Maltese or Hebrew. One that we encountered looked particularly intelligent, so after the formal courtesies of convention, we risked:

"Tozeur? loin?"

"Là-bas."

"Combien de temps?"

"Il en faut."

"Quelle distance?"

"Au bout."

Our interrogatory was not a success. Another time we should trust to our guide and bury suspicion. The Arab has some admirable traits, but he often does not carry things to a finish, not even for his own benefit, and his acquaintance with French is apt to be limited and his conversation laconic. The Oriental proverb on the life of the nomad suits the Arab to-day as well as it ever did.

Mieux vaut être assis que debout,
Couché qu' assis,
Mort que couché.

Finally a blue line of haze appears on the horizon, something a little more tangible than anything seen before, unless indeed it prove to be a mirage. If not a mirage, most likely it is Tozeur, or rather the palms surrounding that sad, but interesting centre of civilization.

"Tozeur?" you ask again, of Mohammed this time, and that faithful Arab with a curt assent breathes the words "*C'est bien ça*." Mohammed is learned, has mingled with the world, and is suspicious that your confidence in his powers is not all that he would have wished. "Well, here we are," he thinks, "now what have you got to say?" "*C'est bien ça: Tozeur! Oui! oui! Je n'ai trompé pas jamais, moi, Mohammed.*" By this time he has thought it all out and is really mad, but his mood soon passes and he becomes as before, taciturn, faithful and willing. The Arab doesn't bear malice for trivial things.

By contrast with the houses of Kairouan, Sousse and Sfax, which cut the blue of the sky with a dazzling line of

white, Tozeur is but a low, rambling mud-coloured town of native-made bricks called *tobs*. The impression from



A Street in Tozeur

afar is one singularly sad and gloomy, for the architectural scheme of the builders of Tozeur is more akin to that of the Soudanese than to that of the Berber or Arab. In its

detailed aspect the architecture of Tozeur is remarkably appealing, quaint, decorative, and founded on principles which the Roman builders of old spread to all corners of the known world of their day. This may be the evolution of the architecture of Tozeur or it may not, but certainly the flat-brick construction is wonderfully like that of the baths and cisterns of the Romans.

Tozeur itself is melancholy, but its situation is charming and contrastingly interesting to all who hitherto have known only the Arabe-Mauresque architecture of the cities of the littoral, or the Roman ruins of the dead cities of Lambessa, Timgad and Tebessa. The little garrison which the French planted here some years ago has gone, and only a few European functionaries remain, those in control of the *impôt*, a doctor and an innkeeper, who doubtless means well, but who has a most inadequate establishment. And this in spite of the fact that Tozeur is the capital of the Djérid.

The Djérid itself is a great expansive region between the plateau steppes and the desert proper. The natives are Berbers who have become what the French call *Arabisé*, though many of their traditions seem to be paganly Roman rather than Mussulman.

The hotel accommodations of Tozeur are endurable, but as before said they are inadequate. Travellers are rare in this desert oasis, and two or three sleeping-rooms scantily furnished—a bed, a chair and a wash-basin—are the extent of the resources of Mme. Besson's apologetic little hotel.

Tozeur's market is a mere alley of inverted V-shaped huts of reed, wherein are sold—after much solemn bargaining and drinking of coffee—all the small wants of the desert Arab, such as a morsel of town-baked bread, hobnails for his shoes, a piece of tanned leather—with the fur on—with which to make a new sole, a hank of thread, a tin pot or pan, or a bandanna handkerchief—which however must have stamped upon its border some precept

from the Koran. The Arab's personal wants are not great, and as he almost invariably carries his worldly goods about with him they are accordingly not bulky.

Our only diversion at Tozeur was watching an hysterical fête or pilgrimage to the neighbouring tomb of a marabout who died in recent years richly endowed with sanctity. The history of this holy man was told us as follows:

This man, Alfaoui, had lived all his life in Algeria, practising the virtues of the Koran so assiduously that he was reckoned by his friends and neighbours as one of the good and great. Having taken too active a part in the insurrection of 1871, when the whole country—except Kabylie—was ablaze with sedition, he fled precipitately from Algeria and settled with his goods and chattels at Tamerza in Tunisia, one of the oasis villages of Tozeur, arriving in time to great repute and respect among the people.

Alfaoui's compact with Allah was not however so intimate but that he occasionally conspired against the French, who, in the eighties, came to occupy Tunisia, as they had Algeria fifty years before. His conspiracies were in a way harmless enough, and consisted principally in "doing" the French officials at every opportunity. He refused to pay his taxes, and advised his followers to do the same; he smuggled tobacco, firearms and matches, and trafficked in them among the natives, to the loss of a certain revenue to the fiscal authorities, who, when they finally ran him to earth *en flagrant délit*, found only some thousands of empty match boxes with English labels,—but made in Belgium nevertheless,—the kind of matches where you scratch three before you get one to burn, or as the French say of their own abominable *allumettes*, it takes a match to light a match.

Alfaoui was tried and condemned by the French tribunal, and it was this ready-made "martyrdom by infidels" that caused the faithful roundabout to elevate the

meddlesome Alfaoui the Algerian to the distinction of a marabout, and a house or *kouba* was built for him entirely of brick taken from the sepulchres of a neighbouring cemetery. Thus are holy reputations made to order in the fanatical faith of the Mussulman. Alfaoui's followers to-day are many, and without knowing why they venerate him, thousands make the pilgrimage to his shrine, and wail and chant and weep and have a good time generally. The government says nothing. It fears nothing to-day, and since the Mussulman must have many and convenient shrines for the excesses of his devotion to the principles of the Koran, why that of a *contrebandier* and agitator serves as well as any other and no harm done.

The great date-palm plantations of Tozeur are watered by a complicated system of irrigating canals whose flood-gates are opened every morning by the authorities. A very deep spring gives an abundant supply of sweet, limpid water which runs in miniature rivulets around and through the tentacle-like roots of the Djérid's million palm-trees, bringing the means of livelihood and prosperity to a conglomerate population of thirty thousand souls. Thirty millions of kilogrammes of dates bring a considerable profit to the cultivator, even if a goodly share does go to the exploiter, the transportation company and the middleman. Four hundred thousand frances in taxes and duties are collected yearly, from this most fertile of all African date-growing regions.

All this is something to think about and marvel at when one is threading his way slowly through the palisaded trunks of a grove of a million palm-trees. The Arab knows the value of dates as a food product, but it needed the European to exploit the industry profitably.

The Arab's veneration for the date-palm is great, and he affectionately refers to it as "the tree which grows with its feet in the water and its head in the fire of the sky."

There is another product of the palm-tree less beneficial

to man, and that is a sort of wine or sap which is gathered much as the Mexican gathers *pulque*, or as the resin is sapped from the pine-tree. It's a soft, pleasant, somewhat sticky liquid, seemingly innocuous, but its after effects may be safely guaranteed as being of the "stone-fence" variety. The Arab, by tradition, is a temperate person in food and drink, but the European has taught him to drink white wine and he himself has copied the French and taken (in small numbers fortunately) to absinthe, and now he has got a ready-made distillery of *lagmi* in every palm-tree. The government proposes some sort of control of this "moonshining," but the wheels of the law, like those of God, move slowly, and the seed of dissolution may yet be sown among the Arabs of Tozeur before the fiscal authorities find a way to levy a tax on *lagmi*.

No one who ever saw the *indigène* villages attached to a fertile Saharan oasis will fail to remark that in spite of the proximity of the cool, welcome shadow of the thick-growing palm-trees, the *adobé* (*tob*) huts are invariably huddled together upon some blazing, baked spot of ground with not so much shelter from the sun's rays as is given by a flagpole. Why indeed is it so? The Arab may be like the Neapolitan in his contempt for those who walk or live in the shade, but certainly the sun-baked existence which most dwellers in Arab mud houses live for twelve months out of the twelve must be enervating and discouraging, or would be if the Arab ever felt the effects of heat and cold, which apparently he does not. Perhaps this is the explanation of the motive which prompts him to select his town sites where he does. The case is not so hopeless though; the palm-tree grows quickly; and a dozen years would transform the most dreary, monotonous Arab town of sun-cured mud walls and roofs into a garden city which would rival Paradise. Perhaps some day the "movement"—as we call the latest vogue in America and England—will strike North Africa, and then we shall have graded streets,

lamp-posts on every corner and artificial lakes with goldfish in them. And then where will be the rude picturesqueness of the Arab town which charms us to-day?

Tozeur is not a lovely town, even as African towns go, but it is interesting, comfortable, and accessible, after you have once got to Sfax and Gafsa. It is altogether a little bit of mediævalism which even the life of the Arab of to-day cannot change. And there is scarcely any evidence plainly visible to indicate that Tozeur is not living three centuries back in the past.

The environs of Tozeur offer views of ravishing beauty to the artist or the more sentimentally inclined. From the height of the minaret of Ouled-Medjed one commands a view of the entire oasis of Degach, with here and there a clump of dismantled ruined habitations and on the horizon the illimitable, miraculous desert mirage.

To the direct south is the great *chott*, so shallow that the trail to Gabès can cross it at its widest part. To the four cardinal points one frames his views of that marvellous African landscape; seen only at its best from within a horseshoe-arched window, the invariable ogive accompaniment of the true Arab replica of Moorish architecture.

The view from the height of Tozeur's mosque is a replica of that of which Richepin sang. It is not Kipling, but it is good sentiment, nevertheless.

"Loin, loin, toujours plus loin, la mer morte des sables
S'étalait sans limite, et rien ne remuait
Sur l'immobilité des flots infranchissables,
Sur l'immobilité de l'air lourd et muet."

Coming down to earth, and making our way gropingly back to Mme. Besson's humble rest house, a storm broke over our heads. It came with the suddenness of night; and sticks and stones and much sand, and hailstones as big as

plover's eggs, fell through a suffocating stillness with blinding force. It was all over in a moment. It came and went like the characters of the stage, without announcement and without adieu, and Tozeur settled down again to its wonted calm.

The *muezzin* calls to prayer at sundown and night falls brusquely on the silent desert air as if an inky wave had engulfed all before it.

THE END.

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Typographical errors corrected by the etext transcriber:

Sud-Algerie=> Sud-Algérie {pg 34}

compared wih California or Bermuda=> compared with California or Bermuda {pg 37}

Kassar-Said=> Kassar-Saïd {pg 63}

Berberes Arabisés=> Berbères Arabisés {pg 79}

no eyes with which to sea=> no eyes with which to see {pg 127}

arcades and faiences=> arcades and faïences {pg 295}

Alfaoui, the Algerian, 923, 924=> *Alfaoui, the Algerian*, 339, 340 {pg 431}

Hamam-Rm'hira=> Hammam-Rm'hira {pg 436}

Haroun-Al-Raschid, 89, 357=> *Haroun-Al-Rachid*, 89, 357 {pg 436}

Sidi-bou-Said, 13, 391, 398-399=> Sidi-bou-Said, 13, 391, 398-399 {pg 440}

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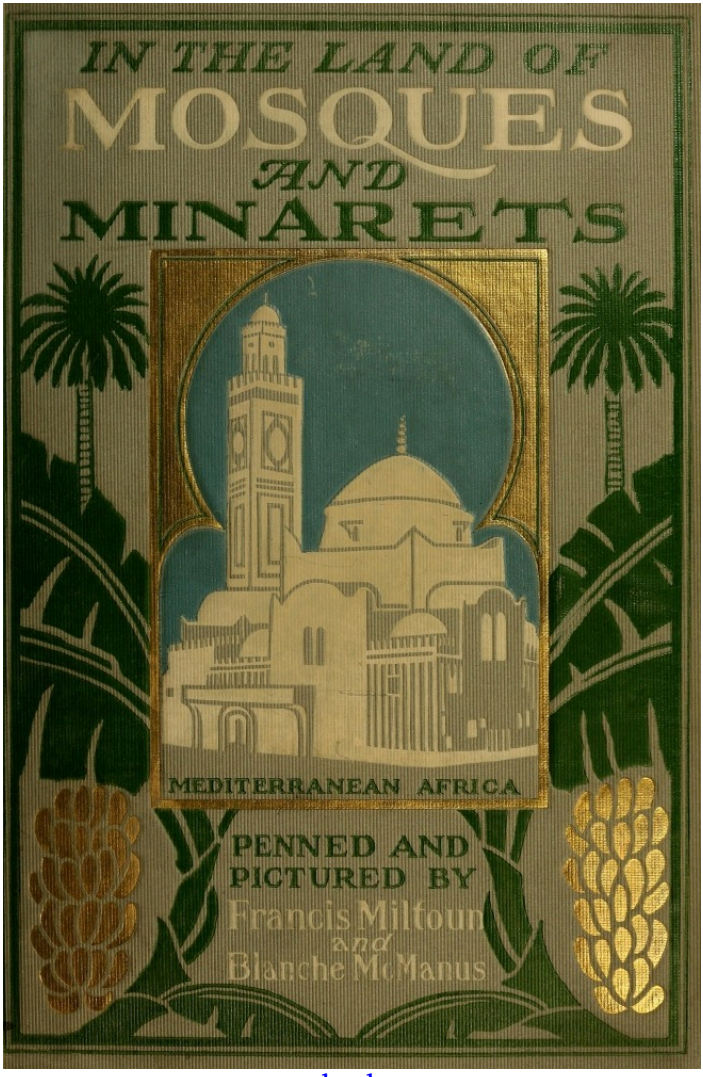
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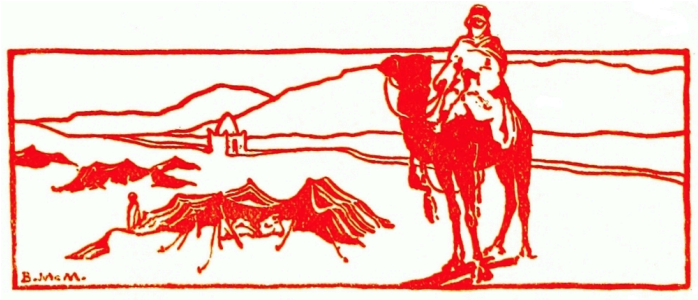
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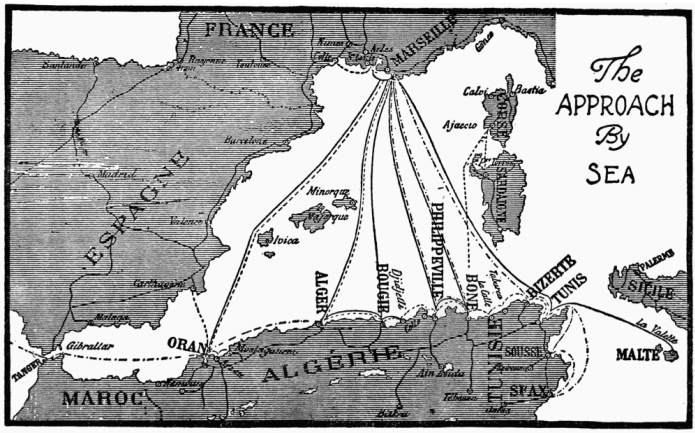
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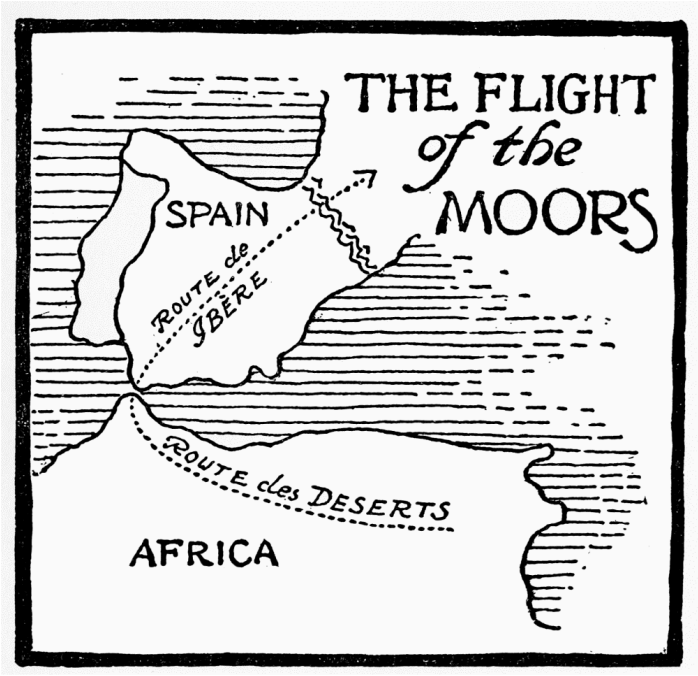
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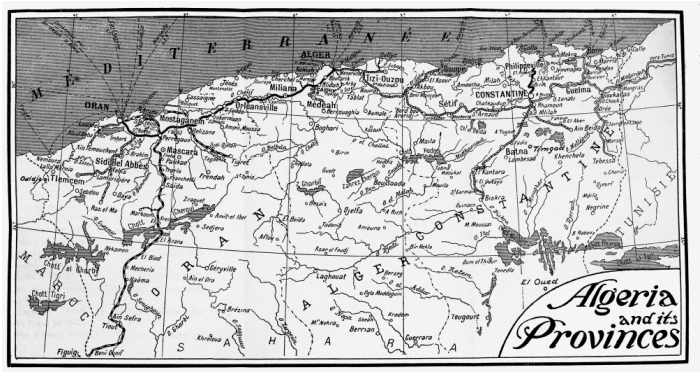
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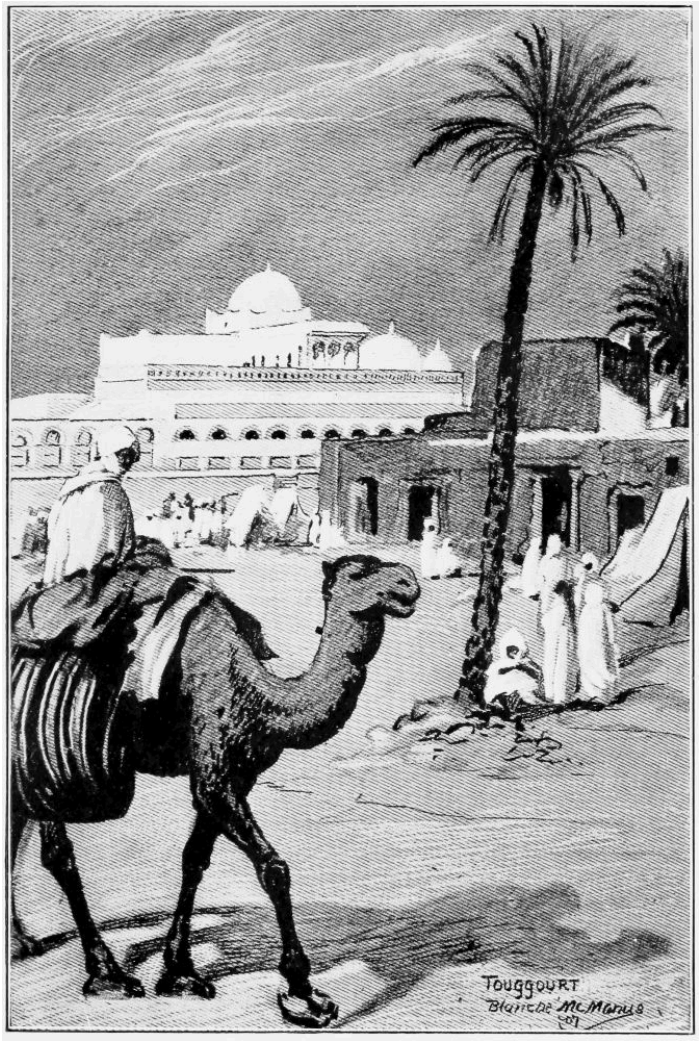
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ROUTE des DESERTS
AFRICA

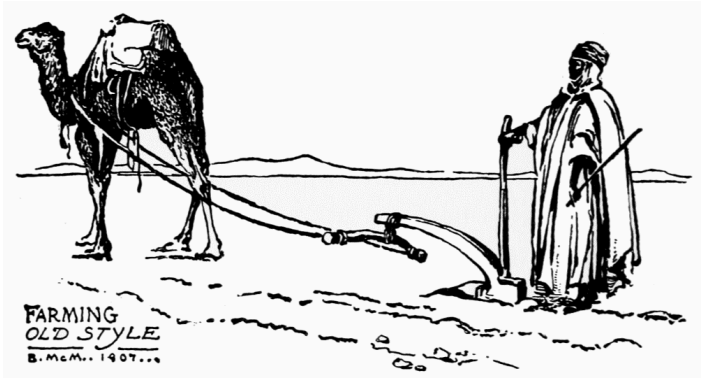
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ALGER
Tizi-Ouzou
Milana
Orleansville
Medeah
ORAN
Mostaganem
Mascara
Sidi-bel Abbes
Tlemcem
Setif
CONSTANTINE
Guelma
Batna
Algeria
and its
Provinces

back



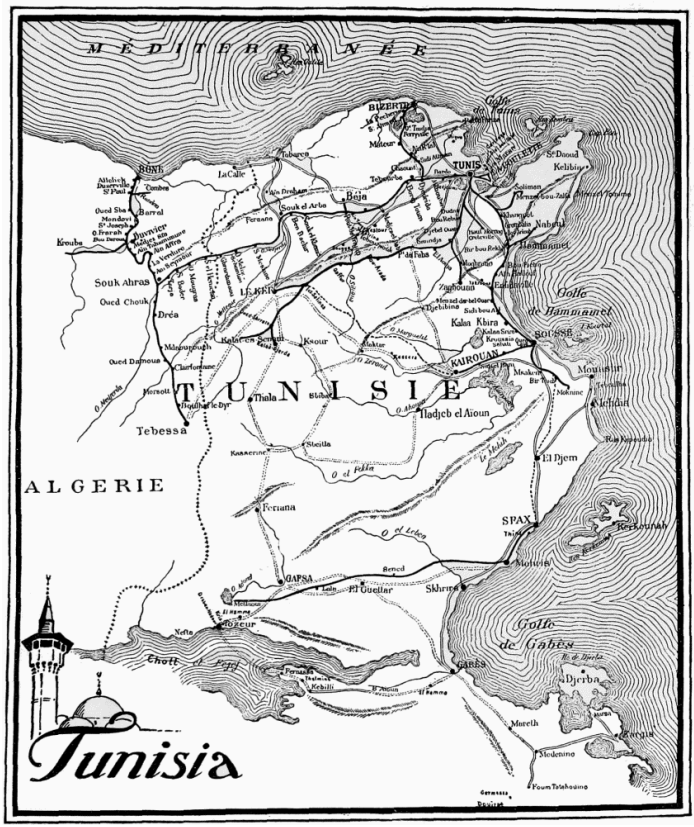
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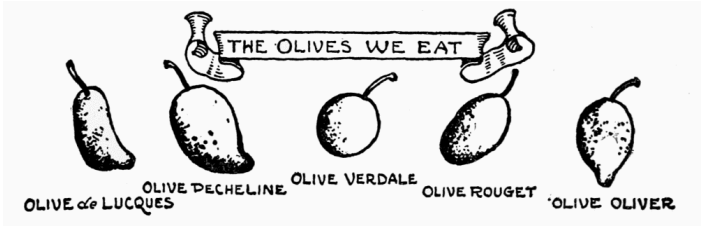

MÉDITERRANÉE
BIZERTE
TUNIS
Golfe de Tunis
Golfe de Hammamet
SOUSSE
KAIROUAN
SFAX
GABÈS
GAFSA
LE KEF
Souk Ahras
Tebessa
Thala
Haidjeb el Aioun
El Djem
Ferriana
Mahrine
Skhira
Golfe de Gabès
Djerba
Medenine
Foum Tatahouine
ALGERIE
TUNISIE
Tunisia

back

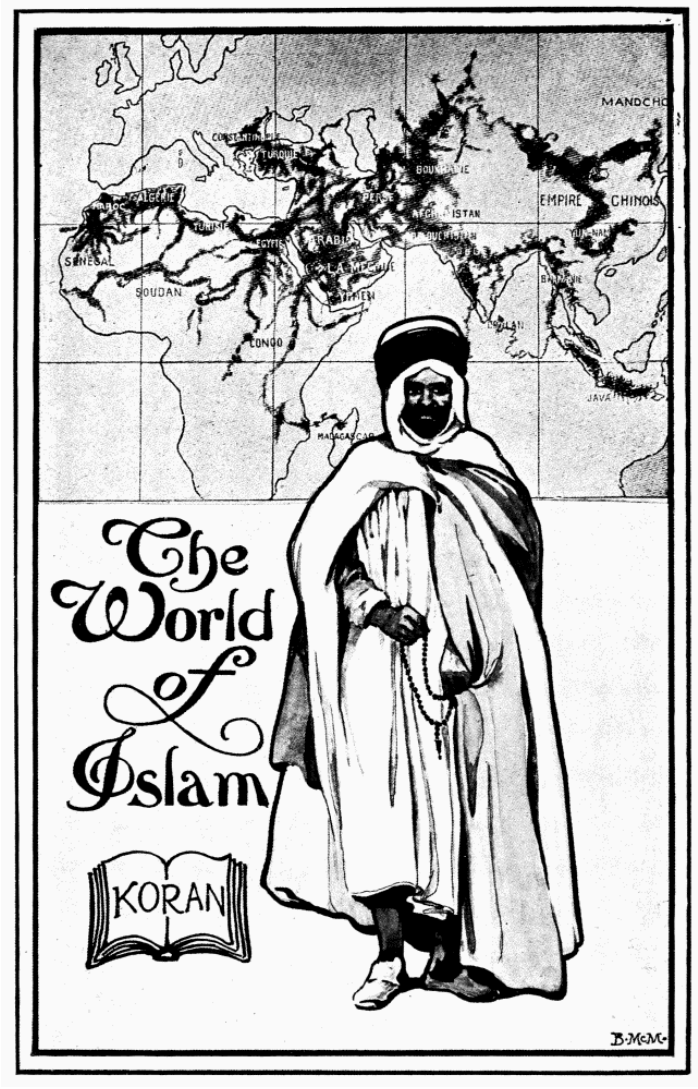


An Old Seal of the Bey of Tunis

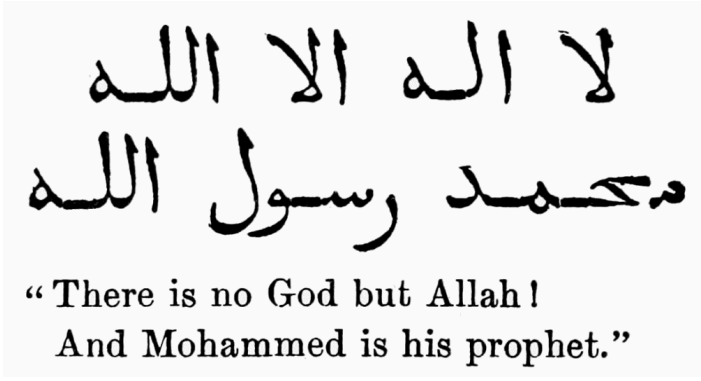
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THE OLIVES WE EAT
OLIVE de LUCQUES
OLIVE PECHELINE
OLIVE VERDALE
OLIVE ROUGET
OLIVE OLIVER

back

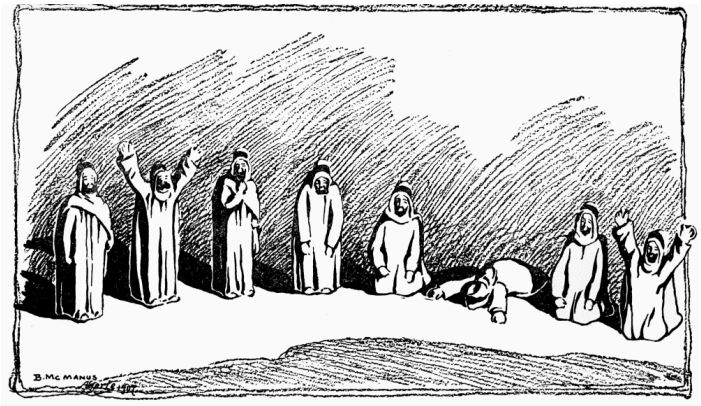

MANDCHO
EMPIRE
CHINOIS
SOUDAN
SENEGAL
LONGO
The World of Islam
KORAN
B·McM·

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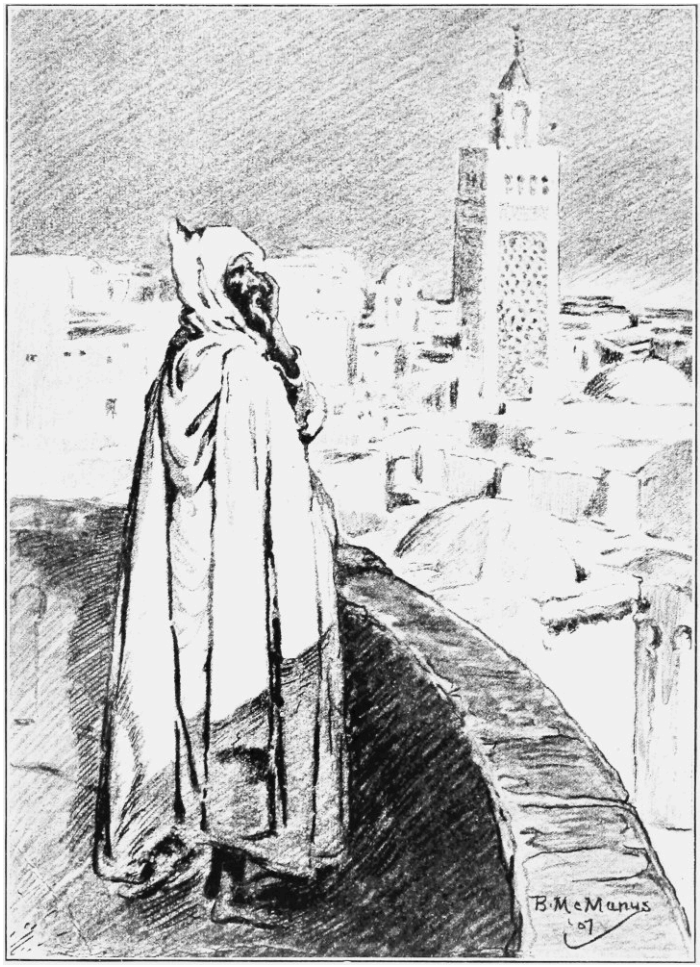


"There is no God but Allah!
And Mohammed is his prophet."

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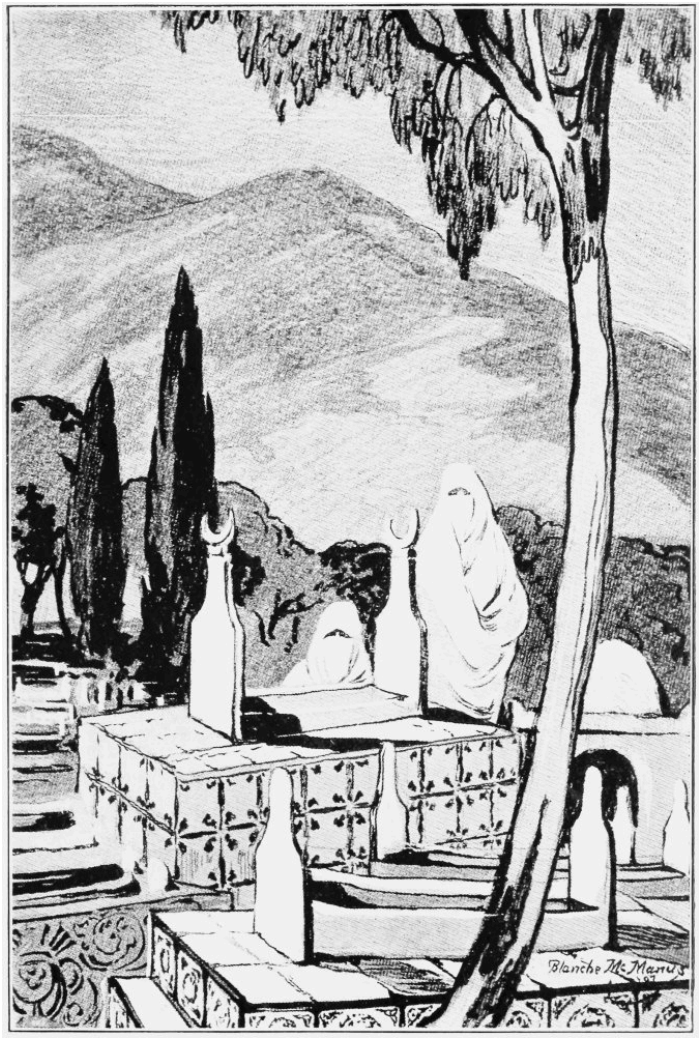
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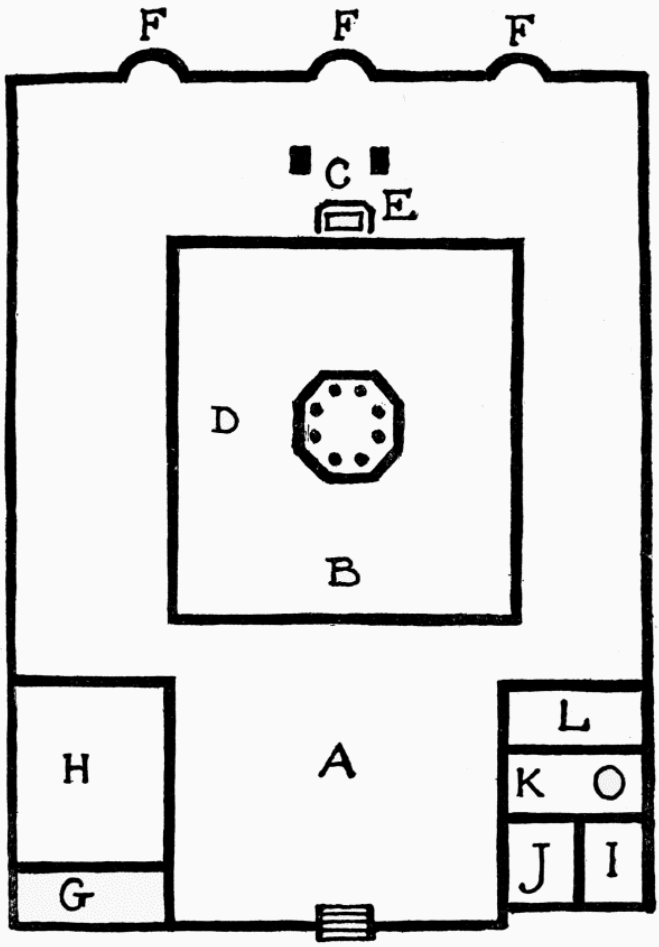
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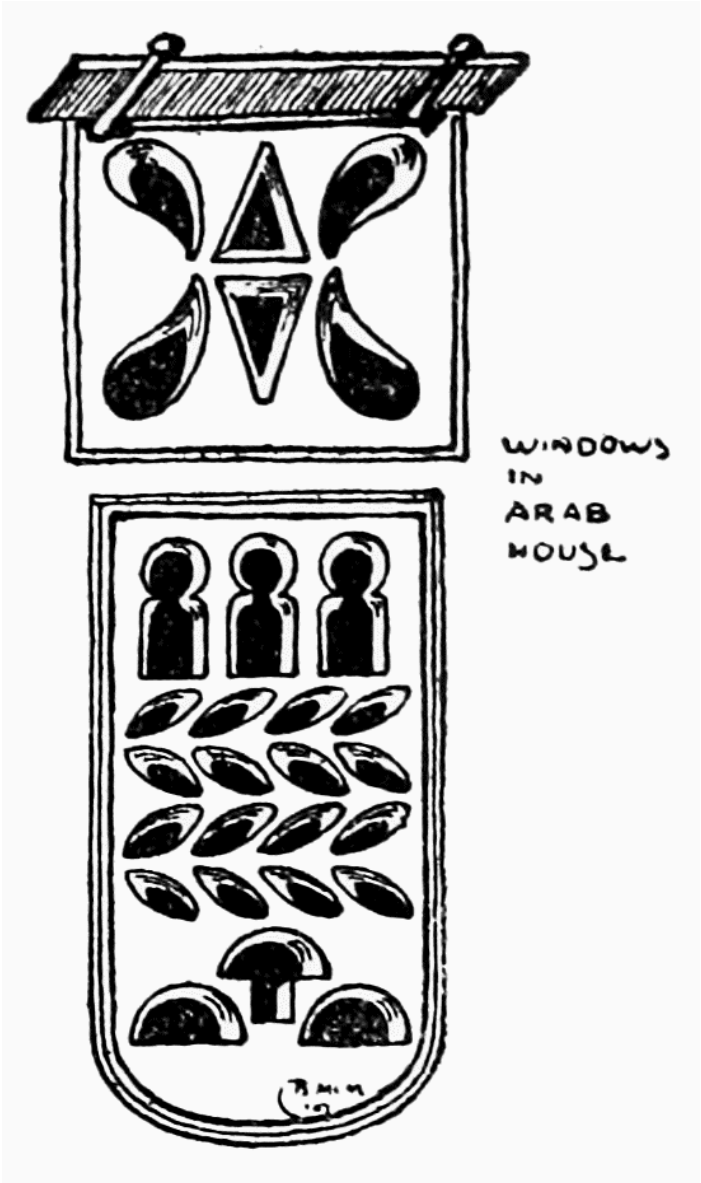
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Ground Plan of a Mosque

A Outer Court. B Inner Court or Sahn. C Pulpits on which the Koran is placed. D Fountain. E Tribune from which the Muezzin calls to prayer. F Three praying-niches. G Horses and camels. H Strangers. I Bath. J Drinking-fountain. K Well.

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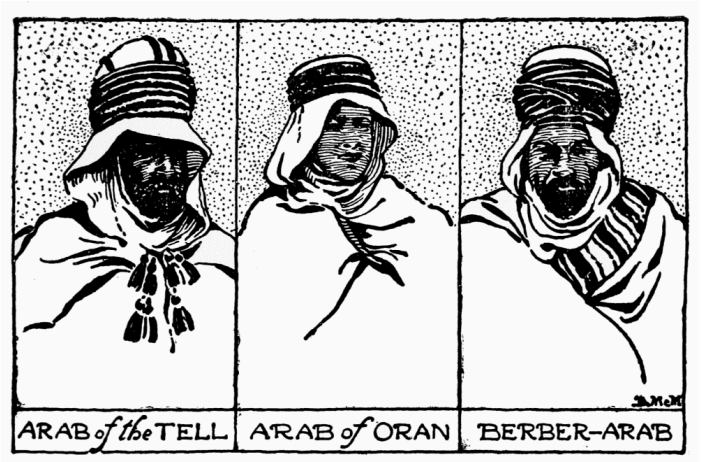
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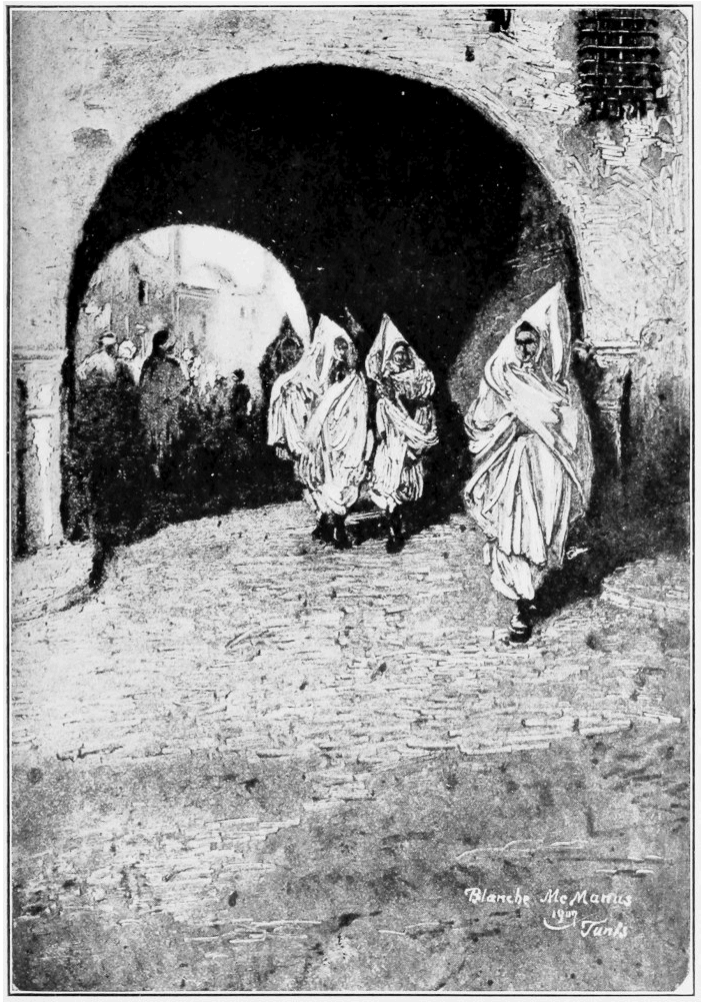
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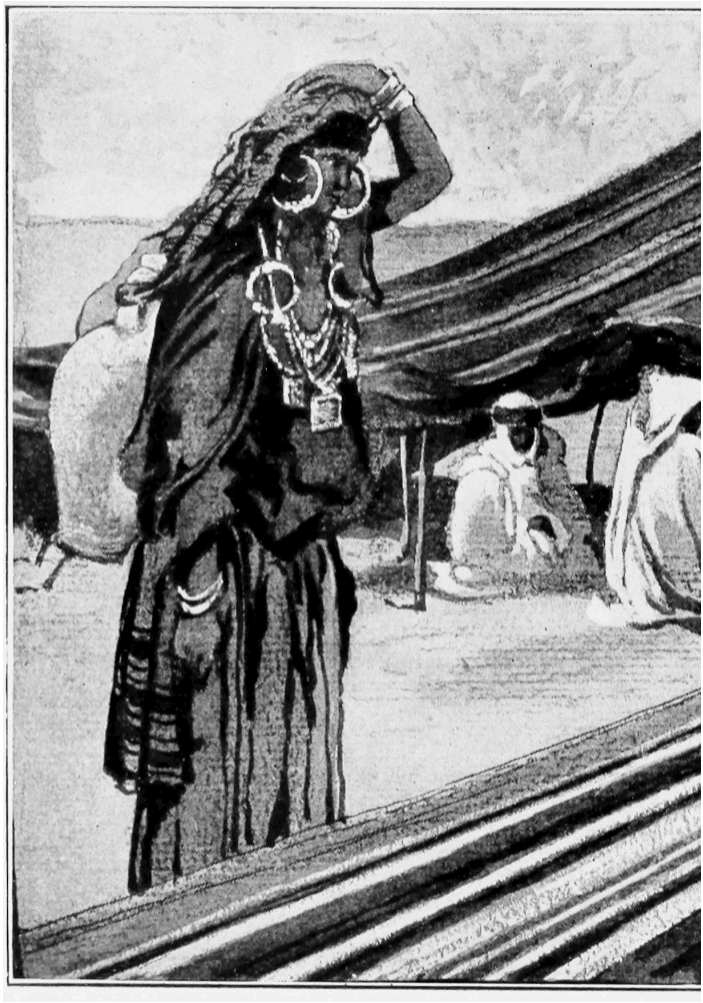
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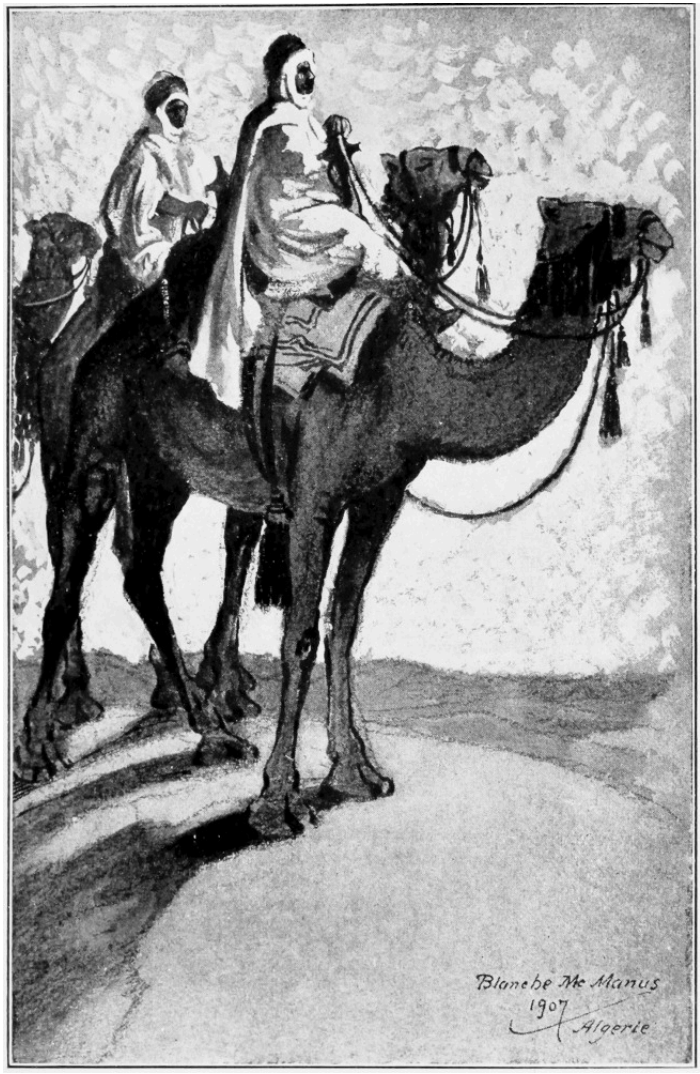
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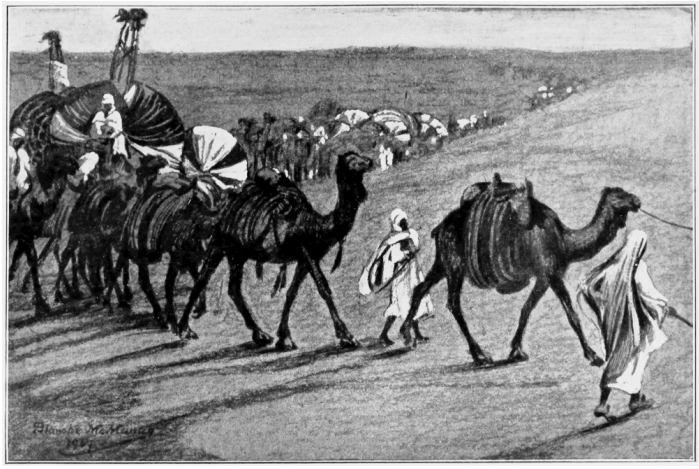
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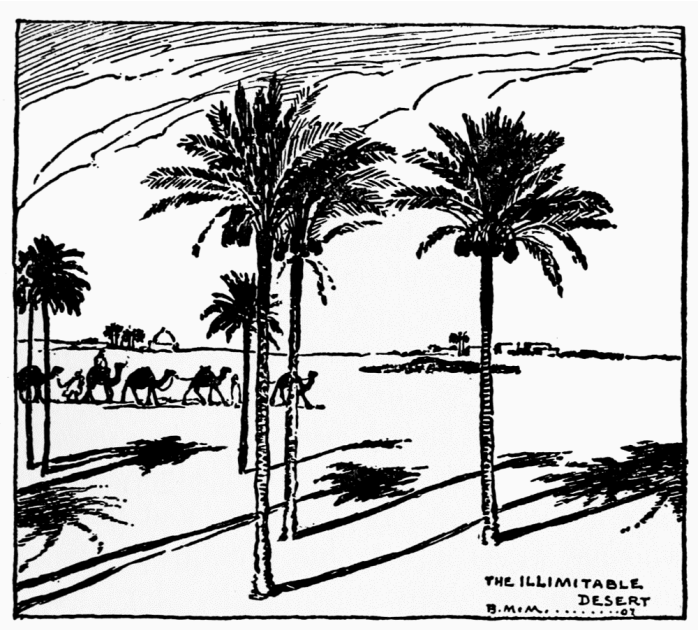
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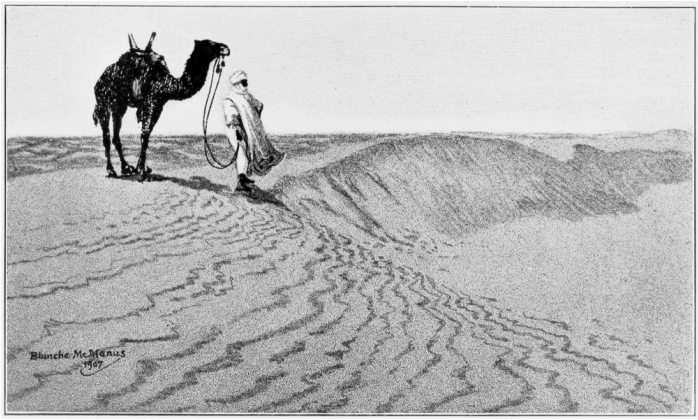
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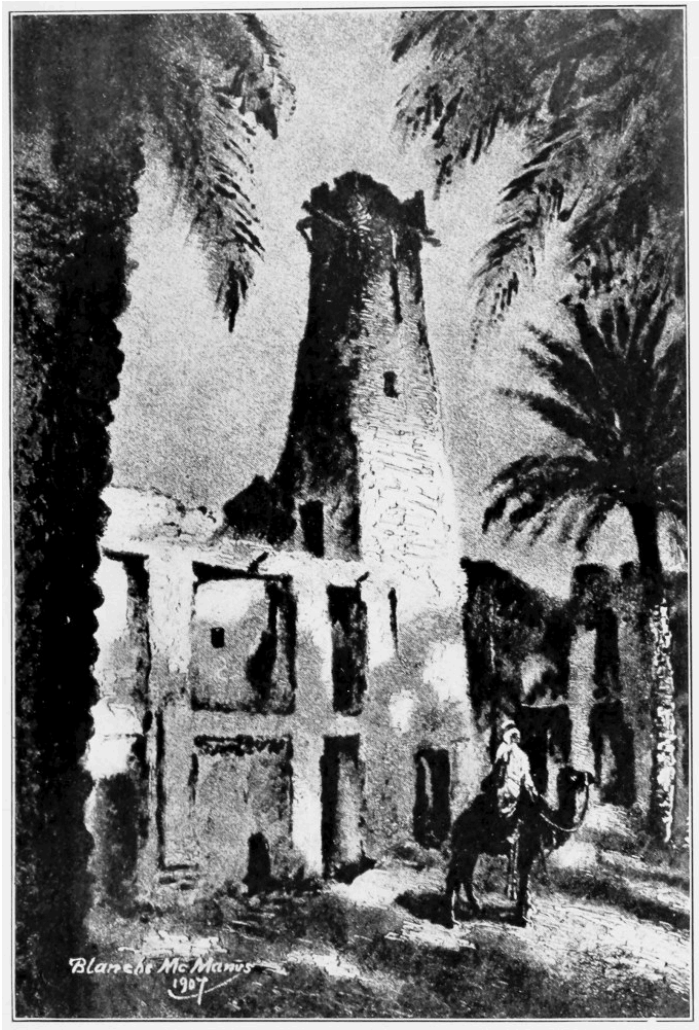
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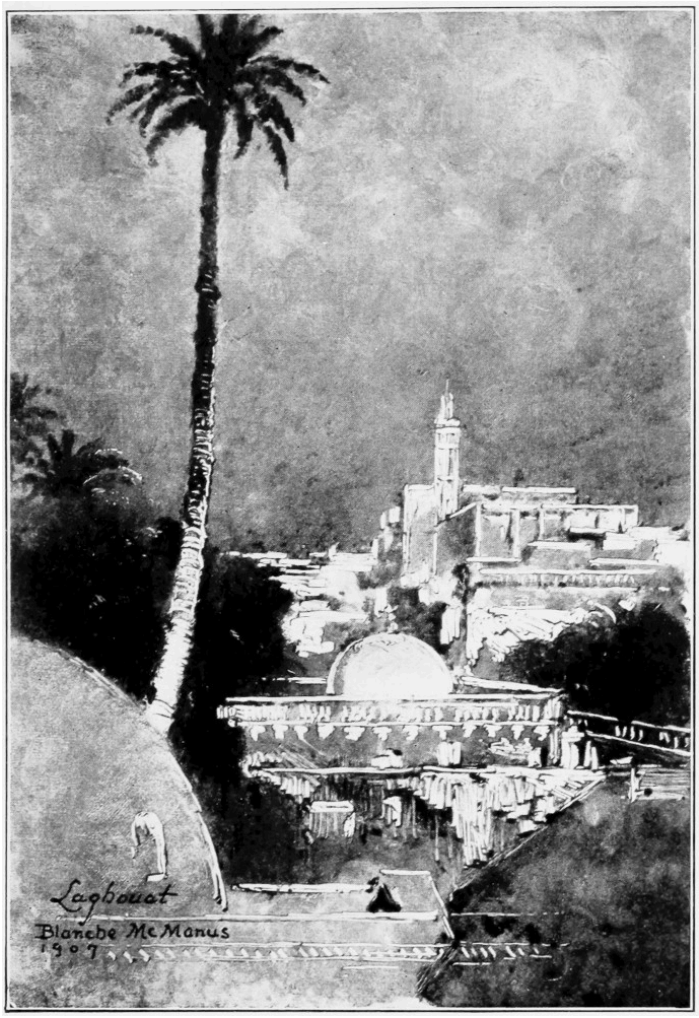
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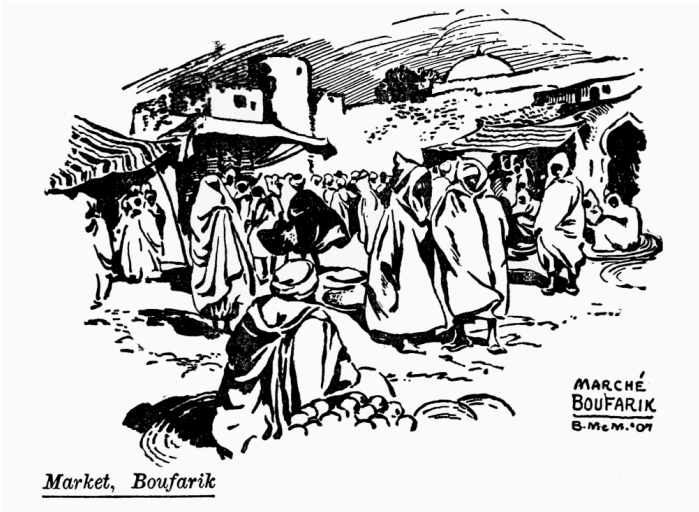


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Hotel at Figuig

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Market, Boufarik

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Algiers
& its Environs
ALGER
KOLEA
CHERCHEL
BOUFARIK
BLIDA
MARENGO
MILIANA
MEDEA

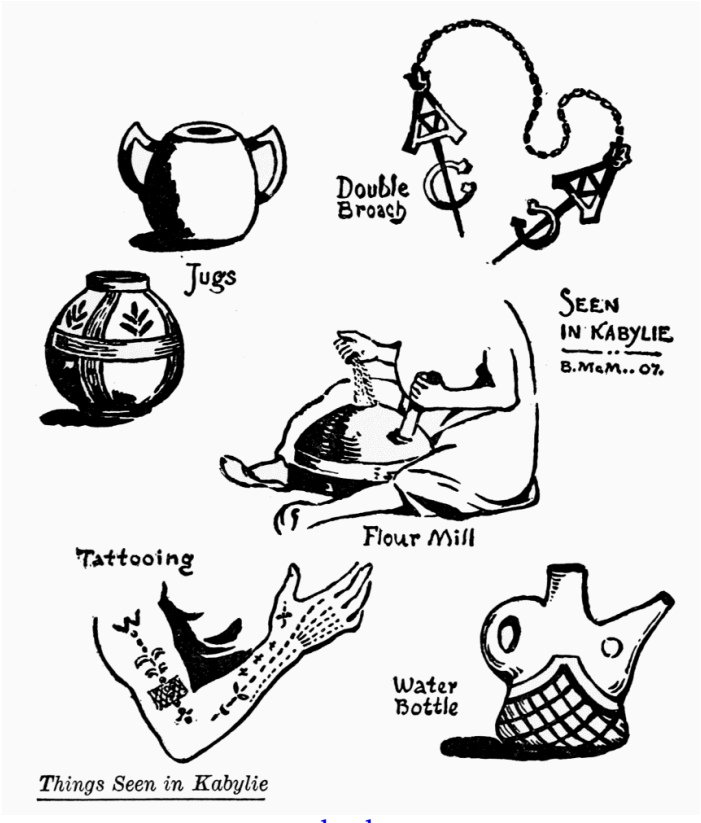
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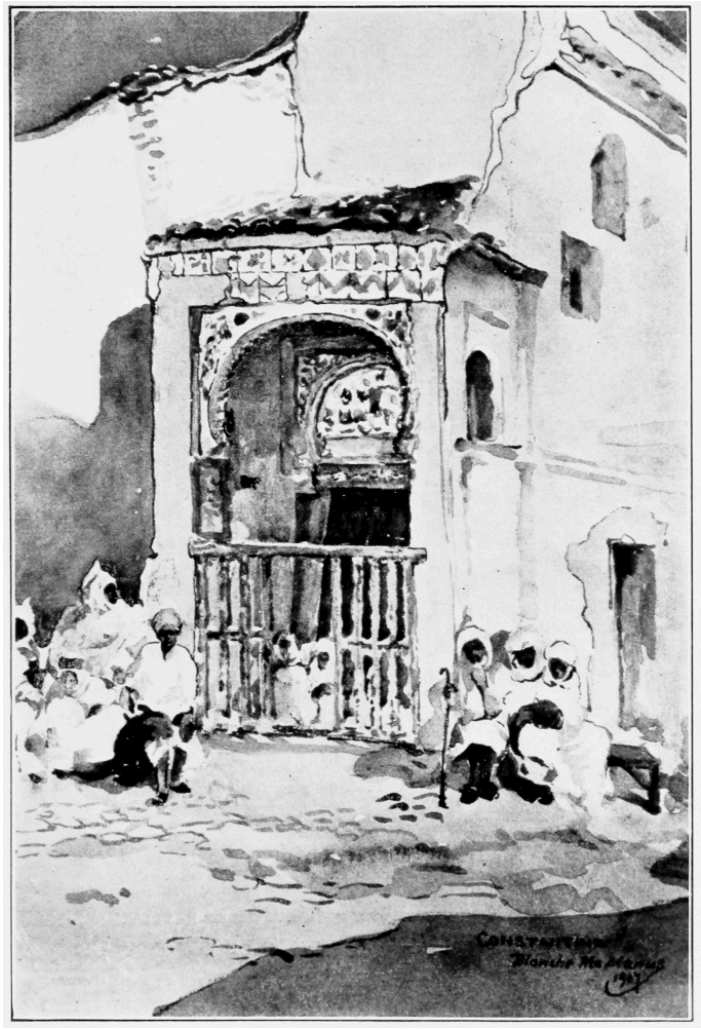


Things Seen in Kabylie

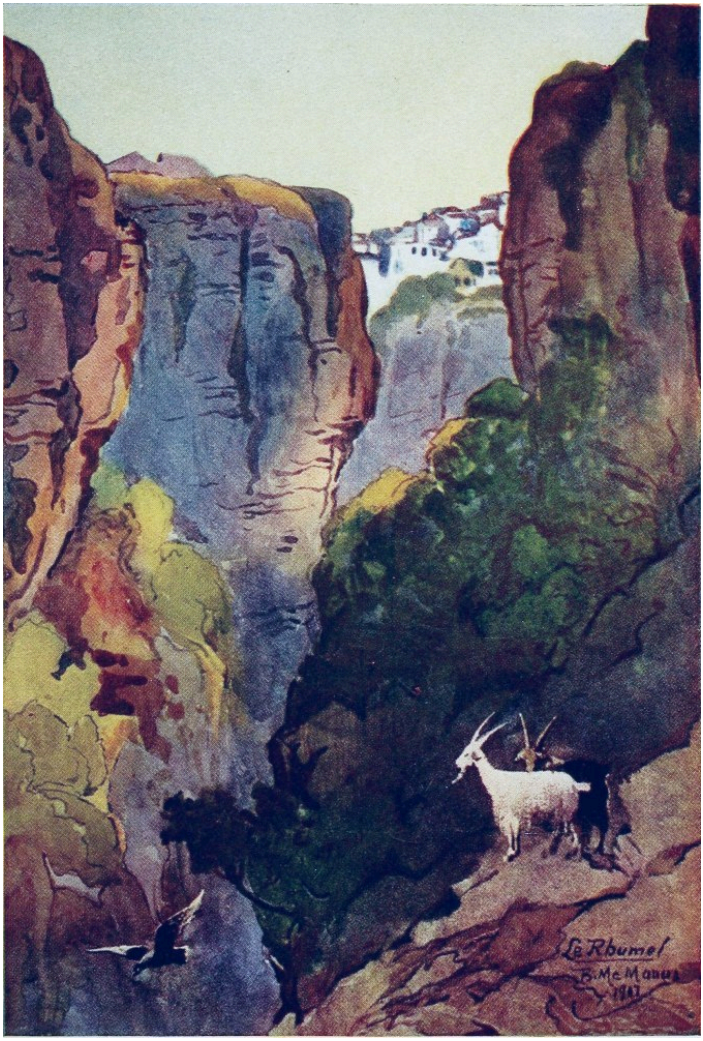
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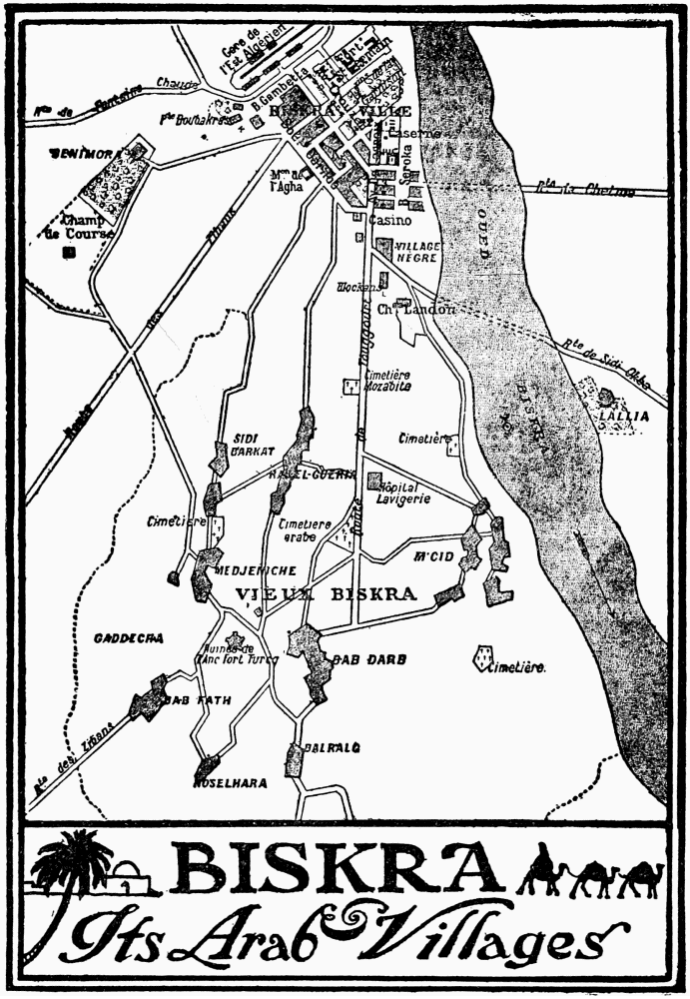
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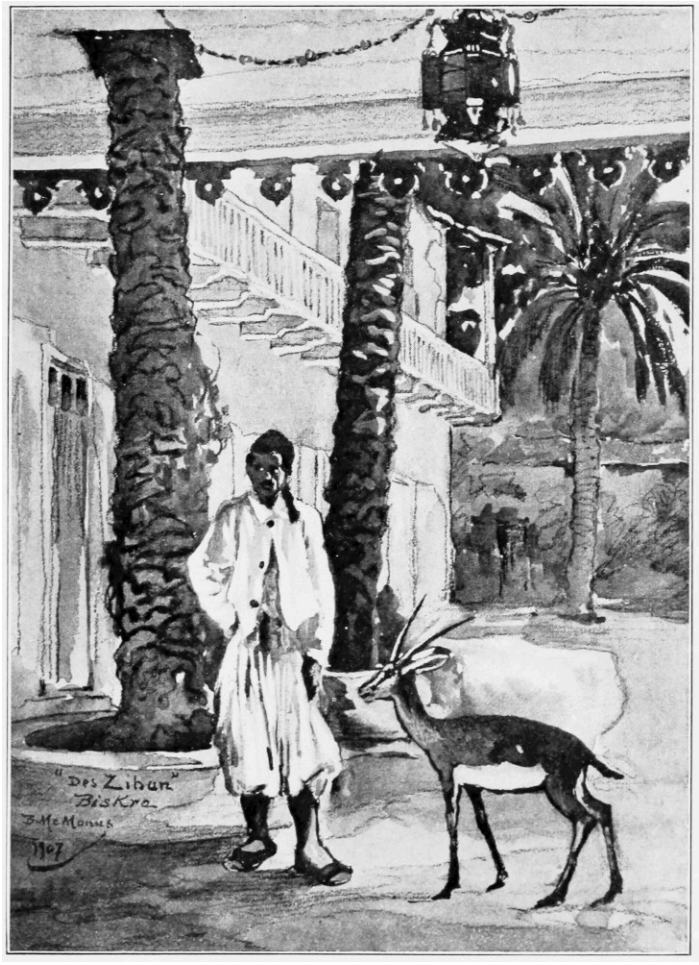
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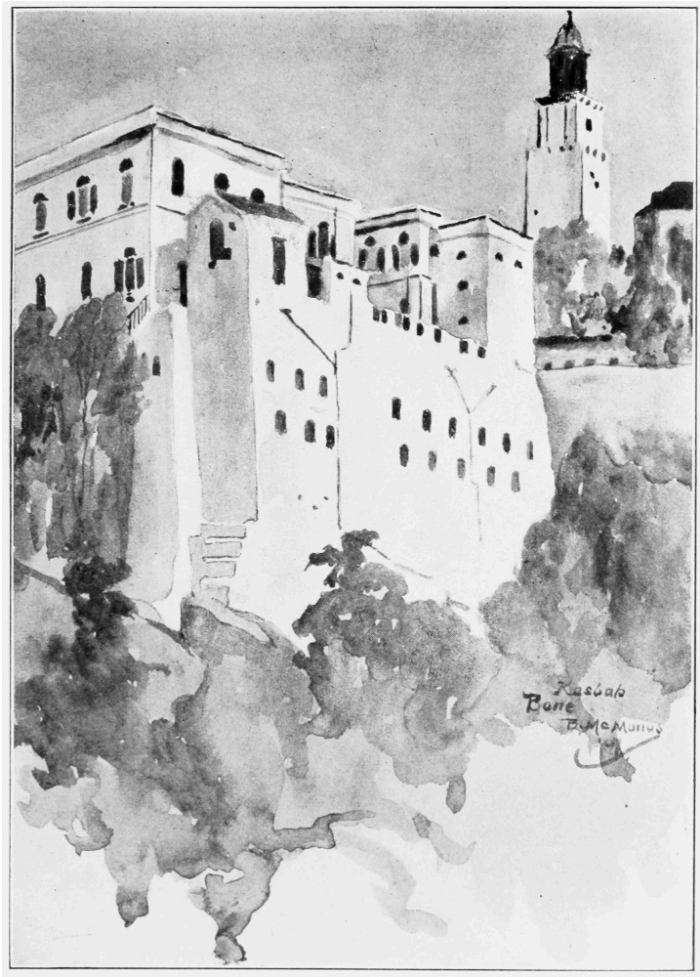
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Gare de l'Est Algérien
Chaumière
Bordj Bou Thadri
B. Gambetta
RESIDENCE
VILLE
Caserne
Mosquée
Marabout de l'Agha
Casino
VILLAGE NEGRE
Ch. Landon
Oued
Rte de Sidi Okba
LALLIA
Champ de Course
Oued Biskra
Cimetière Mozabite
Cimetière
SIDI BARKAT
HAUT-QUARTIER
Hôpital Lavigerie
Cimetière
Cimetière arabe
M'CID
MEDJENICHE
VIEUX BISKRA
GADDECHA
Ruines du vieux fort Turc
BAB DARB
Cimetière
BAB RATH
BALRALO
ROSELHARA
Rte de Tolga
BISKRA
Its Arab Villages

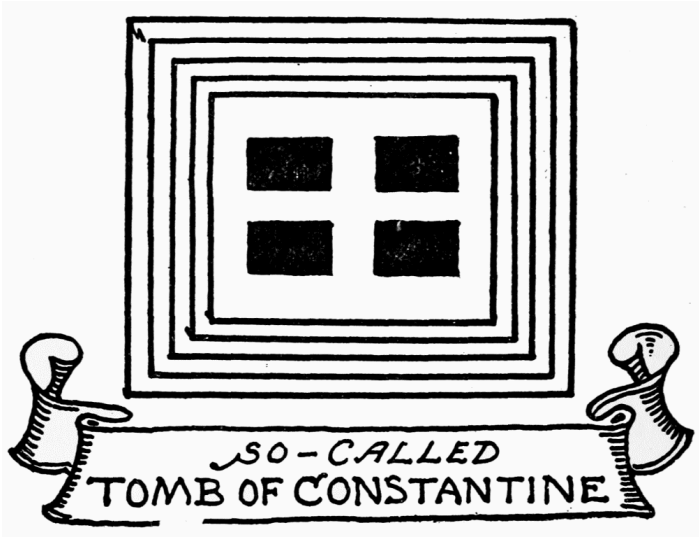
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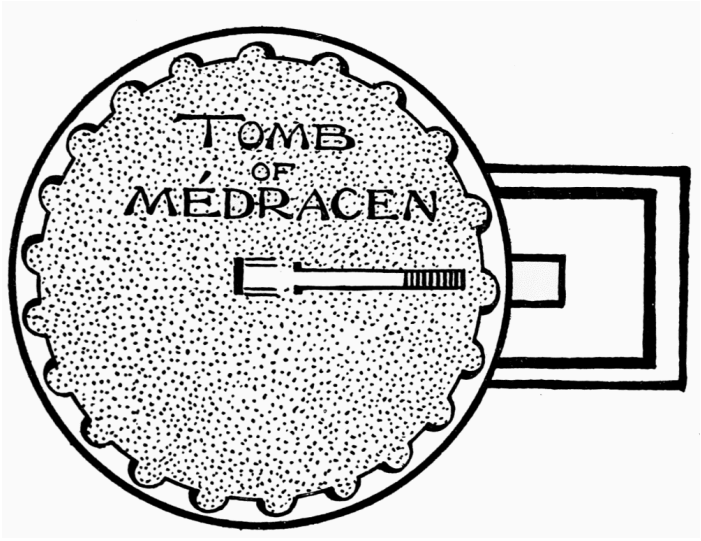
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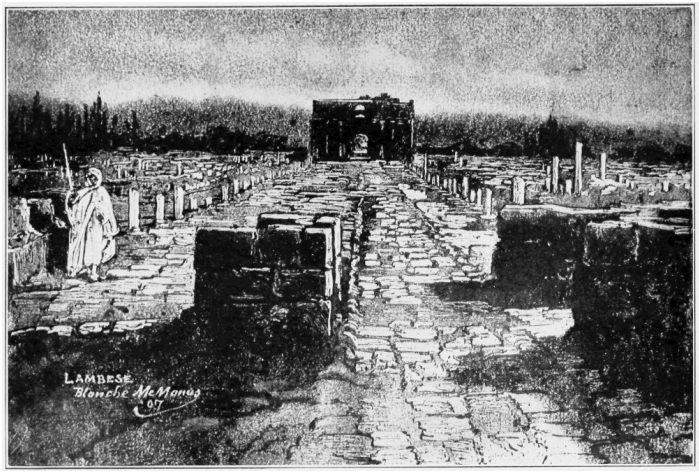
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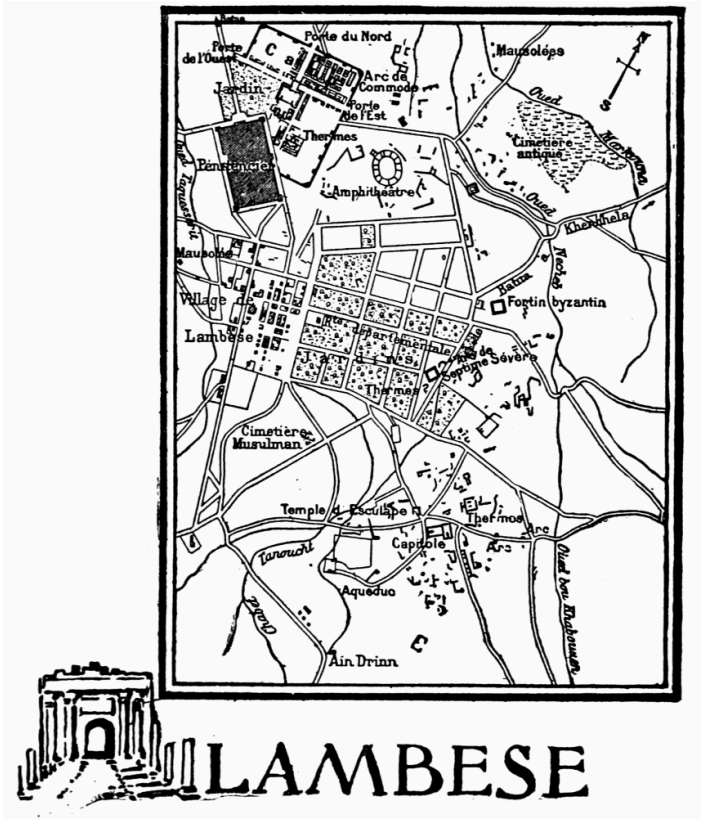
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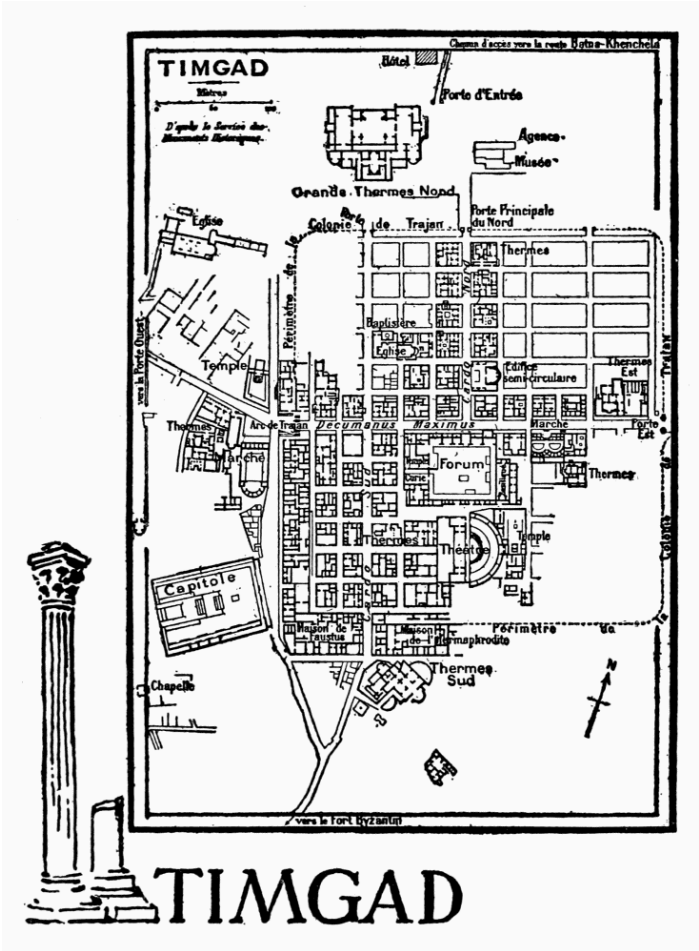
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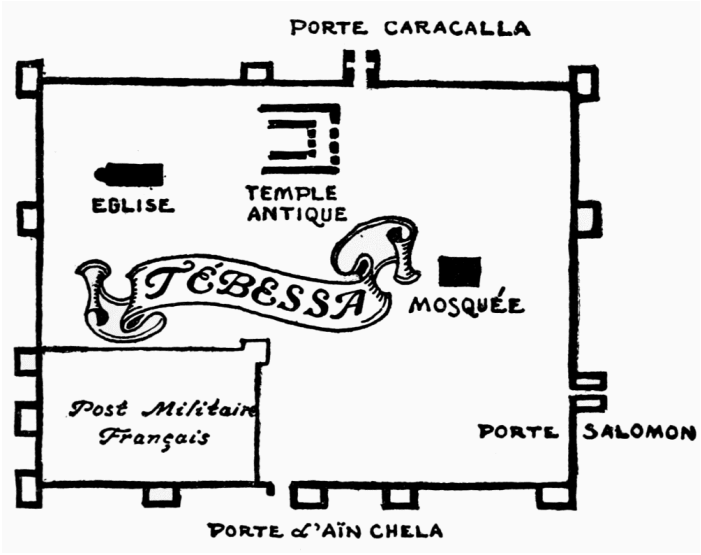
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Porte du Nord
Porte de l'Ouest
Mausolées
Arc de Commode
Porte de l'Est
Jardin
Thermes
Cimetière antique
Pénitencier
Amphithéatre
Oued
Khenchela
Mausolée
Village de Lambèse
Fortin byzantin
Cimetière Musulman
Temple d'Esculape
Thermes
Arc
Capitole
Tarouch
Aqueduc
Oued bou Khebeuza
Ain Drinn
LAMBESE

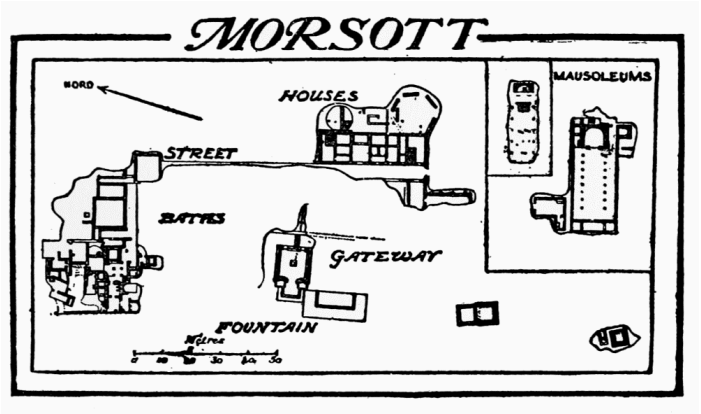
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TIMGAD
Hôtel
Porte d'Entrée
Agence
Musée
Grande Thermes Nord
Eglise
Colonie de Trajan
Porte Principale du Nord
Thermes
Baptistère
Temple
Edifice semi-circulaire
Thermes Est
Thermes
Arc de Trajan
Decumanus Maximus
Marché
Forum
Thermes
Thermes
Théâtre
Temple
Capitole
Périmètre
Thermes Sud
Chapelle
vers le Fort Byzantin
TIMGAD

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PORTE CARACALLA
EGLISE
TEMPLE ANTIQUE
TÉBESSA
MOSQUÉE
Post Militaire Français
PORTE SALOMON
PORTE D'AÏN CHELA

back


MORSOTT
NORD
HOUSES
STREET
BATHS
GATEWAY
FOUNTAIN
MAUSOLEUMS
Meters

back



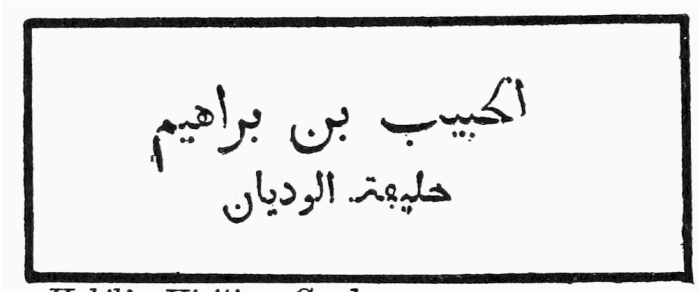
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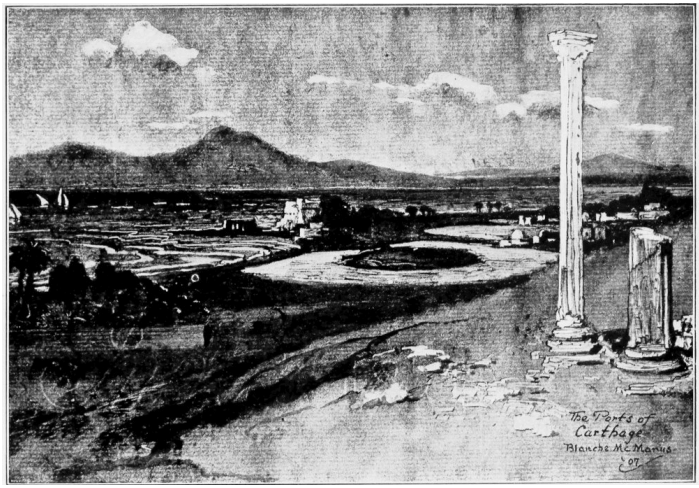


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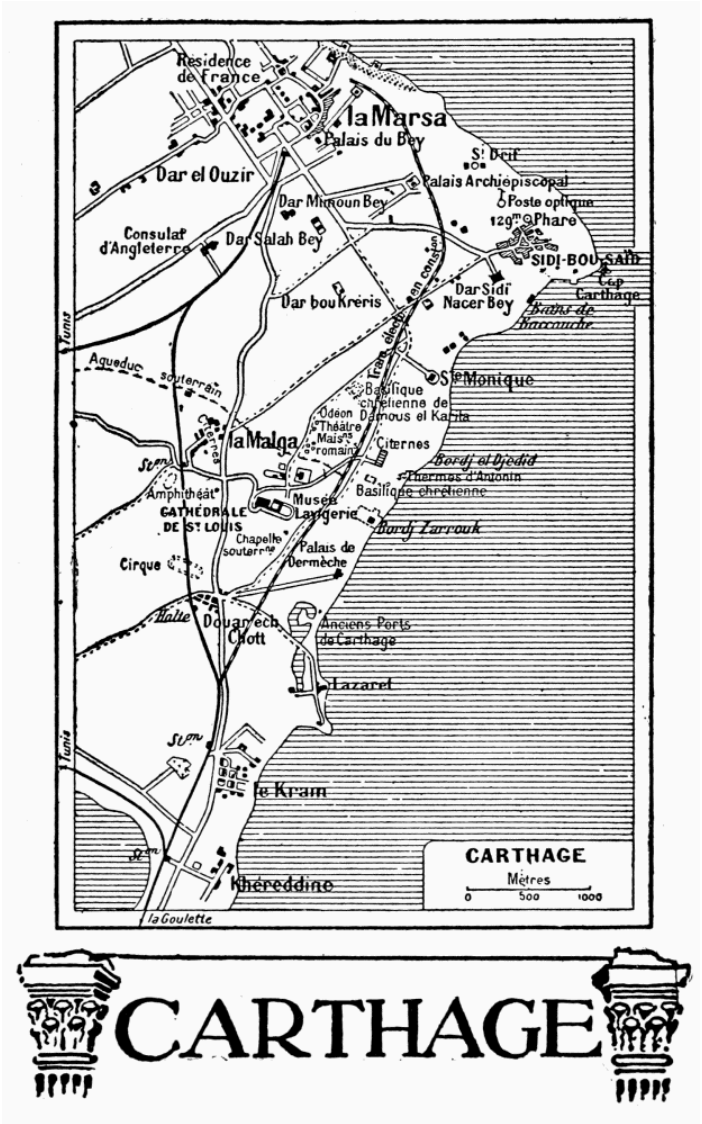


Habib's Visiting Card

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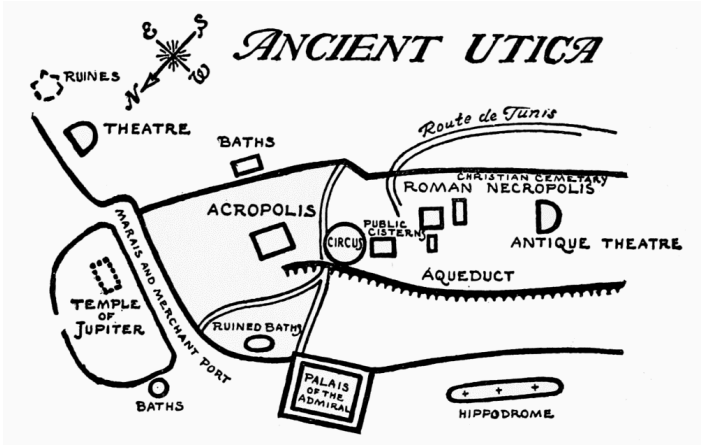


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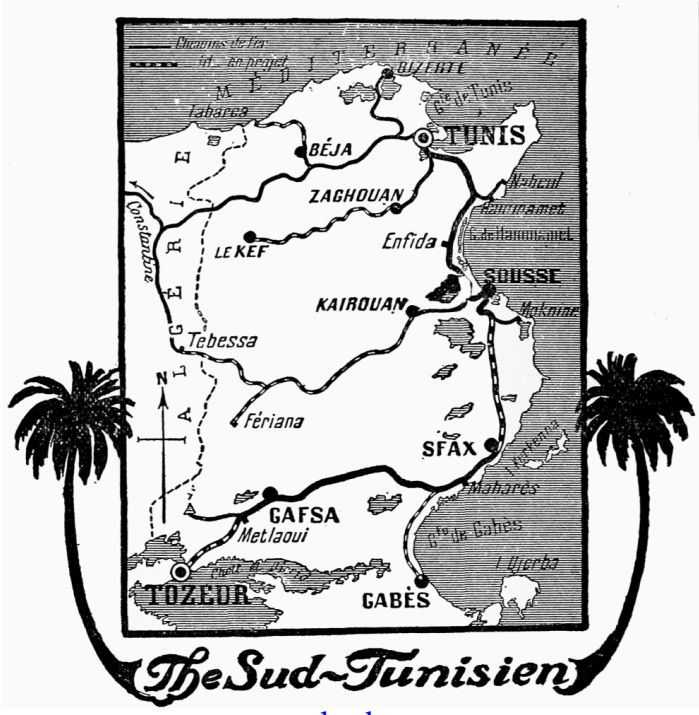


CARTHAGE

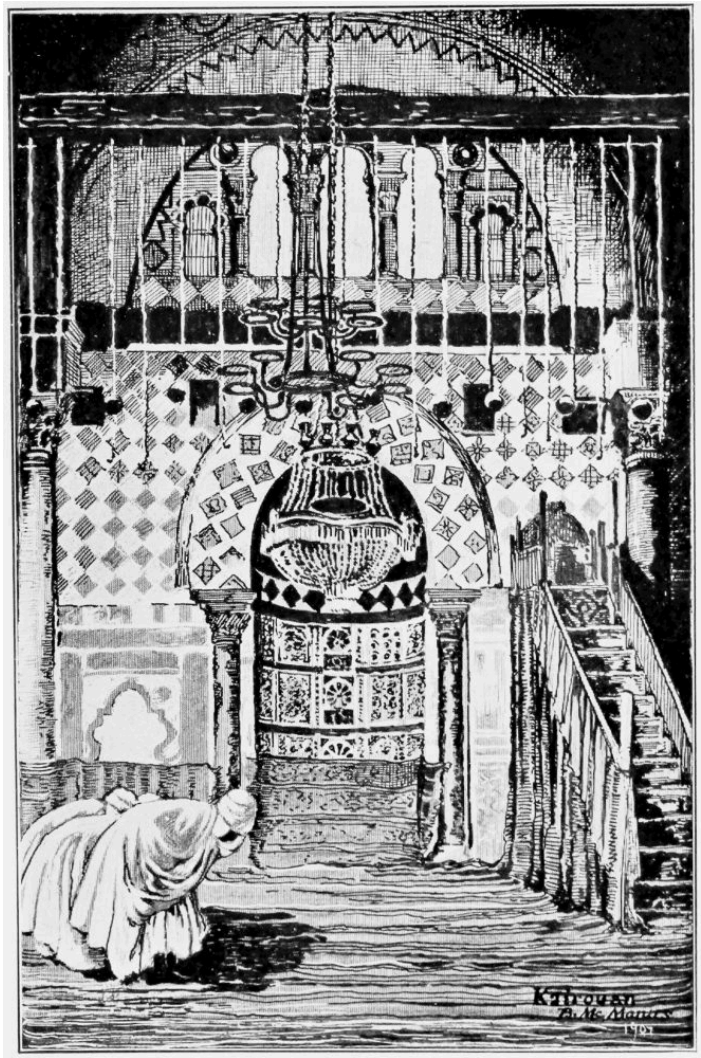
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ANCIENT UTICA
RUINES
THEATRE
BATHS
Route de Tunis
CHRISTIAN CEMETERY
ROMAN NECROPOLIS
ACROPOLIS
CIRCUS
PUBLIC CISTERN
ANTIQUE THEATRE
AQUEDUCT
MARAIS AND MERCHANT PORT
TEMPLE OF JUPITER
RUINED BATHS
PALAIS OF THE ADMIRAL
BATHS
HIPPODROME

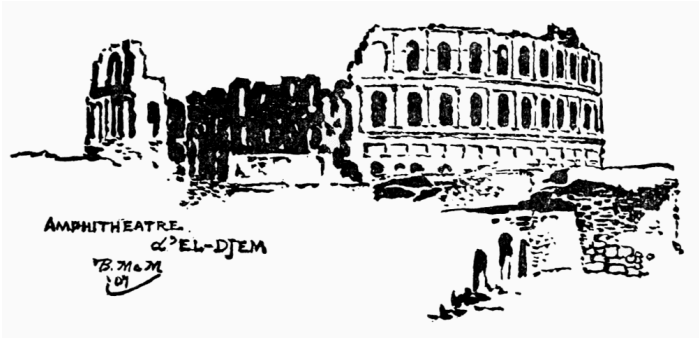
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Chemins de fer
id. en projet
MER MEDITERRANEE
BIZERTE
Tabarca
Gte de Tunis
TUNIS
BÉJA
ZAGHOUAN
Nabeul
Hammamet
G. de Hammamet
Constantine
ALGERIE
LE KEF
Enfida
SOUSSE
KAIROUAN
Makninc
Tebessa
N
Feriana
SFAX
Kerkena
Mahares
GAFSA
Metlaoui
Gte de Gabès
Djerid
Djerid
TOZEUR
GABÈS
The Sud-Tunisien

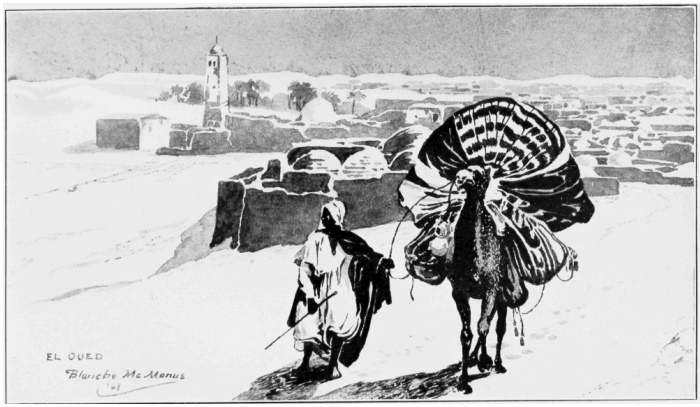
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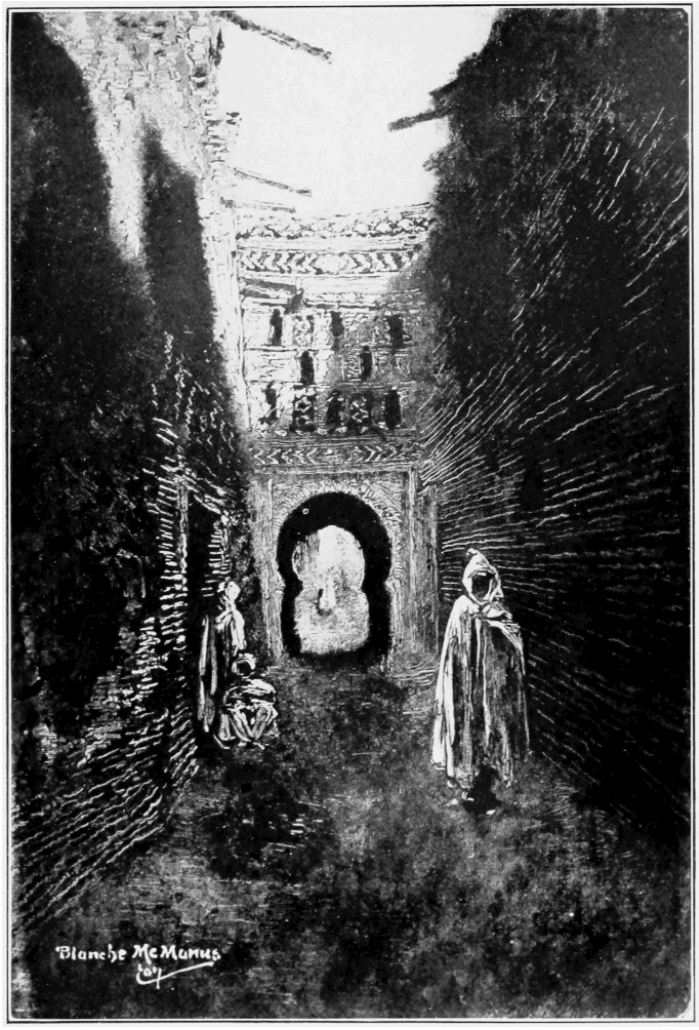
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